The claims and opportunities of the Chri
262.14 M858c
Mott, John R.
Williams Baptist Coll Library

30¢

FISK U.
DUPLICATE

M921c 698

THE MINISTER AS PREACHER

BY

CHARLES EDWARD JEFFERSON
MINISTER AT THE BROADWAY TABERNACLE
NEW YORK

LIBRARY
SOUTHERN BAPTIST COLLEGE
WALNUT RIDGE, ARK.

253.9
J512

NEW YORK
STUDENT YOUNG MEN'S CHRISTIAN ASSOCIATION
124 EAST TWENTY-EIGHTH STREET
1909

MISSOURI BAPTIST COLLEGE LIBRARY
POPLAR BLUFF, MISSOURI

COPYRIGHT, 1909, BY
THE INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE OF YOUNG MEN'S
CHRISTIAN ASSOCIATIONS

Fisk U.
EX
12-8-49 W

262.14
~~J45c~~ M921c

The Claims and Opportunities of the Christian Ministry

A SERIES OF PAMPHLETS
EDITED BY JOHN R. MOTT

THE MINISTER AS PREACHER

By CHARLES EDWARD JEFFERSON

SERIES OF PAMPHLETS ON THE

CLAIMS AND OPPORTUNITIES OF THE CHRISTIAN MINISTRY

THE CLAIMS OF THE MINISTRY ON STRONG MEN

By GEORGE ANGIER GORDON

THE RIGHT SORT OF MEN FOR THE MINISTRY

By WILLIAM FRASER MCDOWELL

THE MODERN INTERPRETATION OF THE CALL TO THE MINISTRY

By EDWARD INCREASE BOSWORTH

THE PREPARATION OF THE MODERN MINISTER

By WALTER WILLIAM MOORE

THE MINISTER AND HIS PEOPLE

By PHILLIPS BROOKS

THE MINISTER AND THE COMMUNITY

By WOODROW WILSON

THE CALL OF THE COUNTRY CHURCH

By ARTHUR STEPHEN HOYT

THE WEAK CHURCH AND THE STRONG MAN

By EDWARD INCREASE BOSWORTH

THE MINISTER AS PREACHER

By CHARLES EDWARD JEFFERSON

LETTER FROM PRESIDENT ROOSEVELT
ON THE CALL OF THE NATION FOR ABLE MEN TO LEAD THE FORCES OF CHRISTIANITY

THE MINISTER AS PREACHER

If any one thinks that the preacher has been superseded by the printing press, he needs to revise his conclusions. In many quarters it is proclaimed with confidence that the day of the preacher is gone or going, and the assurance with which the declaration is made is often bewildering and sometimes convincing. Nor is this to be wondered at, for the arguments against the preacher's continued usefulness are numerous and specious. Are not books multiplying all the time, and do not men read more and more? Has not oratory been well-nigh banished from the court room and also from the halls of legislation? Are there not masterpieces of devotional and homiletical and theological literature upon which the hungry soul can feed in the library or parlor, and can rational men be expected to listen to a sermon in the church when the kings of the pulpit are willing to preach to them at home? Why then should the modern

preacher be reluctant to acknowledge that his occupation is gone?

It all sounds plausible but it convinces no one who is conversant with the facts. For twenty years I have listened to these arguments and for twenty years I have heard churches crying vociferously for preachers. The cries have come from every quarter of the land and they have increased in urgency and number each succeeding year. It is safe to say that never in the history of the Christian Church has the demand for able preachers been so widespread and so insistent as it is today. A preacher who really knows how to preach need not stand idle a single hour in the market place. Books are multiplying and so also are the demands for preachers. I do not say clergymen, but preachers. Of pastors and ecclesiastics there is probably no great scarcity, but of preachers there is a dearth which should set all friends of Christ a-thinking.

A preacher is a teacher and for teaching the age is hungry, almost ravenous. Laymen say with a sigh: "Our minister is a good man, but—" and then they go on to confess that he cannot preach. "Our minister is a faithful pastor, but—" and before another

word is added one knows the nature of the tragedy. "Our pastor has fine executive ability, he would have made a wonderful business man, but—" and here a sigh covers up what the heart feels and the tongue refuses to declare. It is a fact worth pondering that congregations of intelligent people are never satisfied unless ministered to by men who know how to preach. No other gift is a substitute for the gift of preaching. Let the clergyman excel in a dozen departments of activity, his success in them will not atone for his failure in the pulpit. People like executive ability, and they appreciate pastoral fidelity, but they die if deprived of preaching. Give them everything else but preaching, and there is a consciousness that something still is lacking. Sheep are always hungry, no matter with what skill they are shepherded, unless they are fed. A preacher is a man who feeds sheep. While the theorists go on asserting that the day of the preacher has gone, the churches keep on crying, "Give us preachers or we die!"

And no other man than a preacher can satisfy the need. Even a scholar can not. A man may be versed in all the learning of the schools, but if he is

1948

not a preacher all his knowledge counts for nothing. Theological experts have their place, but unless they know how to preach their place is not the pulpit. One of the quarrels which the modern church has with the theological seminary of our day is that it turns out scholars, writers, sociologists, literati, and savants, and only occasionally a preacher. Let the seminaries bend all their energies to the training of effective preachers and the attitude of churches now indifferent or hostile to them will be radically changed. The churches are made up of plain people and the plain people always know what they want. Faddists may think that the day for preaching has gone by, but the churches have never been so certain as they are today that the one man most essential in the work of extending the Kingdom of God is the preacher. The founder of the Christian religion carved out a large place in His Church for the preacher, and until the place of the preacher is filled by a man who knows how to preach, the career of the Church is bound in shallows and in miseries. There are divers wise men now alive who think that preaching is *passé*, but those who see the situation as it is are constrained to confess that Paul

was divinely instructed when he declared that it has pleased the Almighty to save this world by the foolishness of preaching.

The facts, then, of experience are all against those who assert that the day for preaching is gone. The exact truth is that the day for the preacher is just dawning. Never has his field been so wide as now. Never has there been less bigotry and prejudice than today. Many of the old barriers have been broken down, and the Christian world is one, in a sense never known hitherto. No matter what branch of the Church a man may have been reared in, he is now ready to listen to any man who knows how to interpret the oracles of God. Never has the human mind been so alert and so receptive as now. Men are studying everything in the earth and in the heavens above, and in the waters which are under the earth, but they are not satisfied until they have searched the deep things of the soul. Man is spirit, and the knowledge of matter never satisfies him. He is immortal and the knowledge of the things of time leaves him hungry. Modern science has made the world no less mysterious and human life not a whit less critical and august than it has always been.

Men turn now as of old instinctively to the man of insight who can speak illuminatingly of the high things of the spirit. The whole world feels that Jesus of Nazareth has the words of eternal life, and the man who understands these words and who can interpret them in clear and convincing speech to his fellow-men is certain of a hearing.

If this is a materialistic age, it is nevertheless an age seized with an aspiration after the Infinite. The very magnitude of our material prosperity is assisting men to realize that a man's life consists not in the abundance of the things which he possesses. When one looks out across the North American continent thickly dotted with large and growing cities, sees the streams of humanity pouring through the streets, notes how the multitude today, as of old, is scattered abroad like sheep which have no shepherd, and when one meditates upon the confusion of men's minds, the agitations of men's hearts, and the tremendous down-pulling forces of modern society, and when he beholds the crying need for clear-eyed, high-minded, stout-hearted prophets of the Lord who are able to interpret to these multitudes the signs of the times and to apply the principles of the Gospel of the Son

of God to the tangled problems and complicated life which modern civilization has created, he can not help wondering why a larger number of the brainiest and most virile of our college men do not see the unparalleled greatness of the opportunity and hasten to enter fields which offer amplest scope for the exercise of every talent, for the gratification of every ambition, and for the profitable expenditure of every ounce of energy with which the great and generous God has endowed the highly favored of his children.

That the human voice will ever cease to be a factor in the moulding of the lives of men and nations is incredible. The printing press has a work to do, but it can never do the work assigned by the Creator to the voice. As long as men are human they will respond to voices which have in them the music of a loving heart, and will be moved to nobler effort by tongues which have mastered the high art of persuasion. To express lofty ideas in adequate speech, this is the preacher's high vocation. He works directly with the human heart. By means of words he purifies and strengthens immortal spirits. A man of vision, he expresses in uplifting language the glories which his soul has seen.

What greater work on earth than this can any man conceive of? Jesus of Nazareth was a preacher. His greatest miracles were performed by His tongue. Men bowed before Him because no other man had ever spoken as He spoke. It was His conviction that while heaven and earth would pass away His words would never pass away. Down to the latest generation men will be set apart to the high work of causing these words to live in the hearts and homes of men. No other work will ever take precedence over this. No progress of humanity will ever render this work unnecessary. There will be seasons, now and then, no doubt, when other kinds of work, executive, pastoral, ceremonial, philanthropic will seem to have a use and glory which preaching does not have, but such seasons will be few and transitory. So long as the world exists, God will continue to ordain preachers, and these men, when baptized with the Holy Spirit, will resist every inducement to turn aside to other forms of service, saying as the Apostles said nineteen centuries ago: "We will continue stedfastly in prayer, and in the ministry of the word."

THE MINISTER AND THE COMMUNITY

BY

WOODROW WILSON

PRESIDENT OF PRINCETON UNIVERSITY

NEW YORK

STUDENT YOUNG MEN'S CHRISTIAN ASSOCIATION

124 EAST TWENTY-EIGHTH STREET

1909

Copyright, 1909, by
The International Committee of Young Men's
Christian Associations

The Claims and Opportunities of the Christian Ministry

A SERIES OF PAMPHLETS
EDITED BY JOHN R. MOTT

THE MINISTER AND THE COMMUNITY

By WOODROW WILSON

SERIES OF PAMPHLETS ON THE

CLAIMS AND OPPORTUNITIES OF THE CHRISTIAN MINISTRY

THE CLAIMS OF THE MINISTRY ON STRONG MEN
By GEORGE ANGIER GORDON

THE RIGHT SORT OF MEN FOR THE MINISTRY
By WILLIAM FRASER MCDOWELL

THE MODERN INTERPRETATION OF THE CALL TO THE MINISTRY
By EDWARD INCREASE BOSWORTH

THE PREPARATION OF THE MODERN MINISTER
By WALTER WILLIAM MOORE

THE MINISTER AND HIS PEOPLE
By PHILLIPS BROOKS

THE MINISTER AND THE COMMUNITY
By WOODROW WILSON

THE CALL OF THE COUNTRY CHURCH
By ARTHUR STEPHEN HOYT

THE WEAK CHURCH AND THE STRONG MAN
By EDWARD INCREASE BOSWORTH

THE MINISTER AS PREACHER
By CHARLES EDWARD JEFFERSON

LETTER FROM PRESIDENT ROOSEVELT
ON THE CALL OF THE NATION FOR ABLE MEN TO LEAD THE FORCES OF CHRISTIANITY

THE MINISTER AND THE COMMUNITY

There are two ideals between which the Church, first and last, has oscillated in respect to the position that a minister ought to hold in the community. The one is the ideal which expects the minister to hold himself aloof from the ordinary transactions of life, and to devote himself exclusively, and I was about to say almost ostentatiously, to the things which are spiritual. This is the ideal which has led to asceticism, to practices of the Church which have absolutely shut the priesthood off from the life of the community, which have forced upon them an unnatural way of living and an unnatural separation from the ordinary interests of the world.

Then there is the opposite idea—that the minister ought to be part of everything in a community that makes for its betterment, its improvement, its amelioration, its reformation—that he should take a deep interest in everything that affects the life of the

community and be at particular pains to live as other men live, and not in any way show himself separate from the world, not in any way, that, at any rate externally, changes the current and method of his life. Certain men in our own generation have taken the position that, though they wish to preach the Gospel and influence men to come to Christ, they will have a greater influence if they do not accept the ordination of the Church, but remain laymen. It is their impression that a layman can preach straighter to the hearts of laymen than ministers can. There is something of the idea creeping in in various quarters, that the lay instrumentalities find the straightest roads to the hearts of men, and that the ministerial instrumentality is tainted a little by the professionalism which is in it; that the advice of the professional spiritual adviser is less cogent than the advice of the amateur spiritual adviser. This is the extreme form of this view.

Let us acknowledge at the outset that in our time we have been trying to unfrock the ministerial profession, literally and metaphorically. We are afraid of the frock, we are afraid of the sign, we are afraid of the touch of professionalism. It is a characteristic

of our time that we wish to combine all things without differentiation in one single thing that we call life, and the consequence is that we do not know what we would be at. The consequence is that no man sees distinctly enough the particular road that he is trying to tread, the particular function which he is trying to perform in society. He says, "I must be a man," by which he means an added general force in society and not a specialized force in society; by which he means that he must disperse his powers and not concentrate them. And yet the difficulty of modern times is this very dispersion of professional energy, this obliteration of the lines that run and should run between one calling and another. The soldier is proud of his uniform and of the straps over his arms and shoulders, the marks of his rank; and every man who counts for as much of direct force as the soldier counts for ought to be proud of the things that distinguish his calling. I trust that no man will go into the ministry with the hope that he can conceal himself in the crowd, so that no man may know that he is a minister. I hope that he may plan his life so that nobody may ever associate with him without knowing that he is a minister.

How are we going to do this? By resuming the costume, by resuming the ritual, by resuming the aloofness and separateness from the world? That would be better than nothing. It is true, whether we like the fact or not, that the Roman Catholic priesthood, when its members have really remembered their consecration and lived true to it, have made a deeper impression upon the communities they lived in than the Protestant clergy, because they were men whom to look upon was to recall the fact that they were commissioned out of the unseen, that they did not live as other men lived, that they did devote themselves to something separate and apart; that it was intended that when they came into a company of men, those men should be reminded that here was a commissioner who was not a commissioner of the world; and when these men have been true to that standard they have been incomparable forces in the world.

The Protestant minister has too much forgotten the ideals of this separate priesthood. What is it that the minister should try to do? It seems to me that the minister should try to remind his fellowmen in everything that he does and in everything

that he says, that eternity is not future, but present; that there is in every transaction of life a line that connects it with eternity, and that our lives are but the visible aspect of the experiences of our spirits upon the earth; that we are living here as spirits; that our whole conduct is to be influenced by things that are invisible, of which we must be constantly reminded lest our eyes should be gluttonously filled with the things that are visible; that we should be reminded that there lurks everywhere, not ungraciously and with forbidding mien, but graciously and with salvation on its countenance, the image and the memory of Christ, going a little journey through the earth to remind men of the fatherhood of God, of the brotherhood of men, of the journey that all spirits are taking to the land that is unseen and to which they are all to come.

It is very interesting to note how miscellaneous the Church of our day has become in its objects and endeavors. It is interesting to note how central it regards its kitchen in the basement, the bowling alley attached to the church, the billiard table where youngsters may amuse themselves, the gymnasium—the things that naturally associate themselves with

what we call the institutional work of the Church. Did you ever ask yourself what an institution is? An institution is merely a way of doing some particular thing. Now, I am not now making any objection to entertainments, fairs, and amusements, but I do want to call your attention to the fact that the persons whom we lead to do these things are not often reminded of why it is that we ask them to do them there, at the church. I have been in some churches where, when these things were going on, the minute the minister came into the room, you somehow got the impression that you had been reminded of something. The walls of the room were no longer as solid as they were; you saw bigger spaces; the mind seemed to go back to dreams that had seemed vague before you at your mother's knee, and that gentle figure there seemed to say: "It is delightful that we should so disport ourselves, but we are spirits. We know each other only as we know each other spiritually, and only as these things bind us together in an eternal brotherhood is it worth while to be here." I have been at other such gatherings when the entrance of the minister did not suggest anything of the kind—when only another human being had come

into the room—a human being who had no more suggestion of the eternal about him than the youngest person present, a man who did not carry in his mien and attitude and speech any message whatever, whose personality was not radiant with anything.

Now, it does not take a great man to radiate a pure spirit, because the most modest gifts can be associated with very deep and real religious experiences, and the spirit may speak when the tongue is tied. I have myself witnessed the history of a pastor whose preaching was impossible but whose life, divine; and in twenty years there was built up a power out of that church, out of what I might call that speechless church, which did not radiate from the most eloquent pulpit in the other churches of the place; where eloquence seemed empty alongside of radiant godliness; where the spirit seemed to have a thousand tongues and the mind only one; where the doctrine was more expounded by the daily life of the one pastor than by all the expositions of the others. If you can combine the two, if your life can display the secret and otherwise not readily understood principles of the Gospel and your sermons expound the life exemplified, then you have something irresistible for

the regeneration and revolution of a community; but as compared with each other, the reminder of the life is worth a thousand times the suggestion of the pulpit.

Is not that the supreme lesson of the life of Christ? I have sometimes thought that we would be unspeakably enriched if we had known some of the incidents of the days that Christ lived on the earth which were quite distinct and separate from His teaching—the ordinary, now unregarded incidents of His day. For I am sure that there we should have had an example infinitely fruitful for our own guidance, and should have been conscious that in everything that He said, every little thing that He did, there was a divine suggestion, a suggestion of divinity which was not a rebuke to humanity, but which heartened and revealed all that was best of itself, seemed like a sweet air out of some unattained country, like a light coming from some source that other men could not uncover; and that it must have been infinitely gracious to have Him lodge in the house. There must have seemed an atmosphere lingering there which made it impossible to forget that time was part of eternity.

Now the world is not going to be saved except the

minister model himself on Christ. The world is not going to be evangelized unless the minister distinguish himself from the community. The Church is not going to recover its authority among men until its ministers display their credentials in their lives, by showing that the thought that is in them is always the thought that makes for salvation; that they will not teach the things that are impure; that they will not play with the things that are dangerous; that they are not reformers, but ministers of Christ. Did you ever notice that Christ was not a reformer? Not that He would have frowned upon a reformer, but He was not a reformer. He was not organizing men to do what is necessary to be done in order to reconstruct and better human life. He was supplying the whole motive force of that and everything else. It is just as much of a reform to go into a household where there is not the sweetness of Christian feeling and introduce it there by contagion, as it is to sit on a platform at a public meeting intended to set forward some missionary enterprise.

I remember—for I have had the unspeakable joy of having been born and bred in a minister's family—I remember one occasion which made a very

profound impression upon me when I was a lad, in a company of gentlemen where my father was present, and where I happened to be, unobserved. One of the gentlemen in a moment of excitement uttered an oath, and then, his eye resting upon my father, he said with evident sincerity: "Dr. Wilson, I beg your pardon; I did not notice that you were present." "Oh," said my father, "you mistake, sir; it is not to me you owe the apology." I doubt if any other one remark ever entered quite so straight to the quick in me as that did, the consciousness that my father, taken by surprise, was at once so conscious that he was not the person offended, that he should so naturally call the attention of the man who had uttered the oath to what was the simple fact, that the offense was not to him but to his Master. It was exactly as if a disrespectful word had been spoken of the President of the United States in the presence of an ambassador of the United States, the apology would be due not to him but to his Government. And if ministers could always so contrive it that in their presence the presence of God was manifest, the whole problem of the ministry would be solved and evangelization would be irresistible.

There is only one way by which fire is spread and that is by contact. The thing to be ignited must touch the fire, and unless the fire burns in you, nobody will be lighted by contact with you. No amount of studious knowledge of the subject-matter or of the methods of your profession will do you the least degree of service unless it is on fire, and has communicated its fire to your very heart and substance.

Let every man, therefore, who goes into the ministry set himself apart; let every man who goes into the ministry go into it with a determination that nobody shall fail to know that he is a minister of the Gospel. It can be graciously done, without austerity, without rebuke, without offensiveness; it can be done by the simple method merely of being conscious yourself that you are the minister of God. For what a man is conscious of believing, he communicates to those who consort with him; what a man is known to stand for, he transmits to those who are in his presence though he speak never a word. And this consciousness of his will be the consciousness of every company he moves in, a sweet consciousness that will make his presence very gracious and everything he does acceptable to those with

whom he consorts—not shutting him off from the ordinary relationships of life, but irradiating those relationships, making them the means of spreading the consciousness he has of what he is.

When I hear some of the things which young men say to me by way of putting the arguments to themselves for going into the ministry, I think that they are talking of another profession. Their motive is to do something, when it should be to be something. You do not have to *be* anything in particular to be a lawyer. I have been a lawyer and I know. You do not have to *be* anything in particular, except a kind-hearted man, perhaps, to be a physician; you do not have to *be* anything, nor to undergo any strong spiritual change in order to be a merchant. The only profession which consists in *being* something is the ministry of our Lord and Saviour—and it does not consist of anything else. It is manifested in other things, but it does not consist of anything else. And that conception of the minister which rubs all the marks of it off and mixes him in the crowd so that you cannot pick him out, is a process of eliminating the ministry itself.

Now, it is all very easy to say these things; it is

impossible to do these things except by the influence and power of the Holy Spirit. If I could do the various things the right method of doing which I understand, I should be a most useful person. I know that we all should in some measure be ministers of Christ, and a man does not like to say the things that I have said and remember how little he has used his own profession to express that ministry. But, because we are imperfect, is it not the more necessary to know what the ideal is, to see it clearly, to see it steadily enough not to lose sight of it? If you lost the vision where would you go? If you did not know what you would be at, how would you ever find the way again? If you did not know what it was that you were embarking in, how could you make sure that you had found the right course of life? And the beauty of the Gospel is that it is a Gospel which leaves us, not the barren hope that in our own strength we can be useful, but the splendid, fruitful hope that there is One who if we but rely upon Him can inform us with these things and make our spirits to be the true spirits of God.

THE WEAK CHURCH AND THE STRONG MAN

BY

EDWARD INCREASE BOSWORTH

DEAN OF OBERLIN THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

NEW YORK

STUDENT YOUNG MEN'S CHRISTIAN ASSOCIATION

124 EAST TWENTY-EIGHTH STREET

1909

Copyright, 1909, by
The International Committee of Young Men's
Christian Associations

The Claims and Opportunities of the Christian Ministry

A SERIES OF PAMPHLETS
EDITED BY JOHN R. MOTT

THE WEAK CHURCH AND THE STRONG MAN

By EDWARD INCREASE BOSWORTH

SERIES OF PAMPHLETS ON THE

CLAIMS AND OPPORTUNITIES OF THE CHRISTIAN MINISTRY

THE CLAIMS OF THE MINISTRY ON STRONG MEN
By GEORGE ANGIER GORDON

THE RIGHT SORT OF MEN FOR THE MINISTRY
By WILLIAM FRASER MCDOWELL

THE MODERN INTERPRETATION OF THE CALL TO THE MINISTRY
By EDWARD INCREASE BOSWORTH

THE PREPARATION OF THE MODERN MINISTER
By WALTER WILLIAM MOORE

THE MINISTER AND HIS PEOPLE
By PHILLIPS BROOKS

THE MINISTER AND THE COMMUNITY
By WOODROW WILSON

THE CALL OF THE COUNTRY CHURCH
By ARTHUR STEPHEN HOYT

THE WEAK CHURCH AND THE STRONG MAN
By EDWARD INCREASE BOSWORTH

THE MINISTER AS PREACHER
By CHARLES EDWARD JEFFERSON

LETTER FROM PRESIDENT ROOSEVELT
ON THE CALL OF THE NATION FOR ABLE MEN TO LEAD THE FORCES OF CHRISTIANITY

THE WEAK CHURCH AND THE STRONG MAN

I mean by the weak church, the church that has a chance to grow without doing detriment to any other church. I do not mean the situation in which there are four or five churches where there ought to be but one. That situation constitutes no "field." It constitutes a hole and a man does not want to get into a hole. He wants to get into a field.

First picture the weak church in its darkest colors. Its membership is small. So is its salary. Its debt is of more respectable dimensions. The building is weather-worn, the lightning-rod broken, and the weather-vane on the spire firmly askew. The music is poor, the prayer-meetings are dreary and artificial. The membership lacks unity. What the Smiths want the Joneses oppose. The few people who gather for Sabbath services look about with critical eyes and after service report with gossipy tongues the results of their observations. There are stern souls

who watch suspiciously for any utterance from the pulpit that bears an unfamiliar sound. They allow their minister small liberty to proclaim ideas that have brought him relief and inspiration in his effort to express historic religious verities in the vernacular of modern thought. This is the picture in its gloomiest shades. The average "weak church" warrants a far more hopeful description.

Next, look at the strong man. He is a manly man, not a ladies' man or desirous to be ornamental at a pink tea. He does not desire to be coddled by any one. He is strong in friendship, strong in persistence, strong in self-control, not angered by criticism. He is strong in his grip on certain fundamental truths and has some power at least to put those truths before people in language that will command their attention. He has strong confidence in the reality and nearness of the spiritual world.

What can the strong man do in the weak church? It is of no use to send a weak man to a weak church. That has been done a great many times and with little appreciable result. But what can the strong man do in the weak church? The strong man can win the critical person in the pew by the unfailing

courtesy and invincible good-will with which he thanks his critics for their suggestions and promises to give them careful consideration. The critical man will soon be his friend.

He can win the intolerant man in the pew. He will not talk about "new" and "old" theology. He will state his reasons for the view he does not hold more fairly and forcibly than can the man in the pew who does hold it. The intolerant man will be surprised by his pastor's fairness and will become his friend, though not his disciple it may be. The strong man will not preach his doubts. He will preach the things that he believes, and the things that he believes to have a vital bearing upon the lives of men. He will show lucidly just why he believes them and just what their bearing on life is.

He will make it evident to all that he is an honest friend, that his profound ambition is to introduce men into the discipleship of Jesus Christ, that he has a level head and a genius for hard work. Then after a time he will find that he can say to his people anything that his conscience dictates, and only on rare occasions will he experience serious discomfort for having done so.

What can the strong man do in the community outside the weak church? He can get hold of the boys and be a true friend to them. He will be interested in their athletics. He can get hold of the young men; he can get hold of the business men. He can be influential in the intellectual life of the community, in its schools, reading circles, and lecture courses. He can set the boys and girls toward college. He can unobtrusively give dignity, genuineness, and tone to the social life of the community. He can be connected with every movement that makes for the welfare of the people in the community. He can go down into the edge of the death shadow and speak brave words to dying men. He will stand beside the little grave in the country cemetery and comfort with courageous words the bitter grief of those who are closest to it.

He can reach out into the religious life of the people. In a very short time he can unobtrusively begin an investigation of the religious life of scores of men in the community and of scores of families on the farms in the surrounding country. He can find out what their religious antecedents were and what their present religious outlook is. He will work through

the members of his church that are the neighbors of these people. In due time he will begin to bring his personal influence to bear upon them one by one. He will put his shoulder under their burdens, his conscience against their sins, and, if he is the strong man I have pictured, he will not have been very long in that community before he will see men and women, one after another, coming up to the church to confess Jesus Christ as their Lord. He will send up to the city churches men trained in his church for service. The country church is the school in which the leadership of the city church is developed.

He will stay with the church three years, five years, ten years, perhaps all his life. Perhaps after awhile he will go. Go where? God knows to what other church he will go. Perhaps to another church in the condition in which this one was when he came to it. Perhaps he will go to some larger church. This sentence from Charles Kingsley stood for many years over my desk: "Have thy tools ready. God will find thee work."

It is not only true that the strong man can do a great deal for the weak church. The weak church can do a great deal for the strong man. After he

has been its pastor, if necessary all his life, he will find that his own life is enlarged. In the process of making the weak church strong he has gained strength himself. What enlarges the life of a man is to enter into the life of other men with sympathy and help. He will find that he has enlarged himself intellectually. It will tax him to put these great truths effectively before the people. Many of the people have keen minds and will eagerly take the best he can give them. It is an intellectual triumph of no mean order, so to present a truth as to make it grip less active minds. At the end of life, when he draws near to the great quietness and looks back across the years, able to see with clearer vision the things that have been elemental and fundamental in his life, he will experience great satisfactions such as come to few other men. If you question the men who, in their later life have been pastors of city churches but who in early life preached in small communities, you will, over and over again, find them citing as the memory that gives them most satisfaction something that happened in the early years in the small church. One Sunday evening a number of young ministers asked a distinguished

Methodist bishop what it was in his life, the memory of which gave him most satisfaction. He had been preacher, college president, bishop. He thought a moment and then told them of an experience in his first small parish and its outcome in the life of a single family in later years.

The weak church appeals to the strong man to come to it in the power of God and make it, by God's grace, a strong church. Rather it is Jesus Christ who makes the appeal, for what is done to one of these least is done to Him.

THE MINISTER AND HIS PEOPLE

AN ADDRESS DELIVERED BEFORE THE STUDENTS OF THE HARVARD DIVINITY SCHOOL IN 1884

BY

PHILLIPS BROOKS
LATE BISHOP OF MASSACHUSETTS

NEW YORK
STUDENT YOUNG MEN'S CHRISTIAN ASSOCIATION
124 EAST TWENTY-EIGHTH STREET
1909

The Claims and Opportunities of the Christian Ministry

A SERIES OF PAMPHLETS
EDITED BY JOHN R. MOTT

THE MINISTER AND HIS PEOPLE

By PHILLIPS BROOKS

SERIES OF PAMPHLETS ON THE

CLAIMS AND OPPORTUNITIES OF THE CHRISTIAN MINISTRY

THE CLAIMS OF THE MINISTRY ON STRONG MEN

By GEORGE ANGIER GORDON

THE RIGHT SORT OF MEN FOR THE MINISTRY

By WILLIAM FRASER MCDOWELL

THE MODERN INTERPRETATION OF THE CALL TO THE MINISTRY

By EDWARD INCREASE BOSWORTH

THE PREPARATION OF THE MODERN MINISTER

By WALTER WILLIAM MOORE

THE MINISTER AND HIS PEOPLE

By PHILLIPS BROOKS

THE MINISTER AND THE COMMUNITY

By WOODROW WILSON

THE CALL OF THE COUNTRY CHURCH

By ARTHUR STEPHEN HOYT

THE WEAK CHURCH AND THE STRONG MAN

By EDWARD INCREASE BOSWORTH

THE MINISTER AS PREACHER

By CHARLES EDWARD JEFFERSON

LETTER FROM PRESIDENT ROOSEVELT
ON THE CALL OF THE NATION FOR ABLE MEN TO
LEAD THE FORCES OF CHRISTIANITY

THE MINISTER AND HIS PEOPLE

I cannot begin without congratulating those to whom I speak upon the work which lies before them, and assuring them of the perpetual richness and growing life of that profession in which they are engaged. I cannot begin without assuring them that everything that is in the promise of that profession is more than realized in the actual operation of it; and also of my deep conviction that the time has not come, and will never come, when the work of the Christian ministry will be obsolete. I believe that there is every promise of a larger work for the Christian minister today than has ever been in the past. Otherwise I should speak in despair, if I spoke at all.

And yet one of the first things that comes before us, as we think of the work of the theological student and Christian minister, is the great changes that have come in the nature of his work. I am reminded at once, as I begin, of the largely prevailing concep-

tion there is of the difference which has come in the relations which the Christian minister holds to his people and to the community. As we look back and see the position which he held fifty years ago, we are constantly reminded of this difference. We are told a great many anecdotes of the way he stood then, of the prestige which clothed his position, of the authority with which it was invested. We are then pointed to the great changes that have taken place, in which the minister has been stripped of all that prestige, and has no such authority clothing the utterances which he gives from the pulpit.

There are two ways of regarding that change, both of which I should discourage. One of them is the supposition that there has come to be a lamentable deficiency, a great falling away; that the minister does not occupy that position which he once occupied. I remember a clergyman who was an old man just at the time when very many who are now becoming old were very young—I remember hearing this remark repeated, which he made to one who was just going into the ministry: "It has been my exceeding good fortune to have my ministry just at the best time. I entered when it was at its highest

degree of prestige, and had the good fortune to leave it just as it lost its prestige and influence." It was not a very cordial word for a young man who was entering it.

Then there is an entirely different tone upon the other side—a sort of congratulation that that earlier prestige has passed away, and rejoicing that man can now stand before his fellow-man without any of the artificial discriminations that used to belong to the ministry years ago.

It seems to me that both of these methods of regarding the change that has taken place are superficial, and that there is something a great deal deeper to be said about them. We are bound, I think, to recognize that there is a distinct progress going on, and that the old position has a true relation to the new position in which the minister stands today. The old position in which the minister stood, clothed in a certain recognized authority which had its visible symbols, seems to me to have been the crude anticipation of the position in which the minister stands today.

We may say that the changes that are going on are in general of one great sort. Both Christian doctrine

and Christian institutions are leaving off their arbitrary forms and showing their essential conditions. Things manifest themselves in their arbitrary forms first, and afterward show themselves in their essential conditions.

Take, for instance, one of the Christian doctrines, and see the change. There was a time when man was supposed to be appointed to fixed, certain, and precise conditions in the other world—the condition of those who were saved and the condition of those who were lost. It was an arbitrary condition, and one difficult to anticipate. It was a distinction which one found it very difficult to apply to his own life. I believe today that men are looking forward to another life, believing that moral issues are to rule in that life as they rule here; that man's destiny is fixed there according to his nature, and not according to any arbitrary judgment which it is impossible for him to anticipate. The two worlds are thus brought together in healthier association, so that men live today in healthier anticipation and with a more impressive sanction of the other life than they have lived in the past. It seems to me that the change we find in the Christian doctrines is the change from the

arbitrary to the essential; the change from that which rests upon the will to that which has its root in the very nature of things. This fact, applied to the position of the Christian minister, must be the keynote, the principle that solves and makes clear the whole.

With that point in view, I want to speak of the relation of the minister to his people. I shall speak of his relation to the intelligence of his people, to the property of his people, and to the consciences of his people.

When I say "his people," I recognize that there is no such constraint upon the minister today as there has been in times past; that one of the healthier processes of the position which he holds today is the opening of his influence; that he has a right to exercise it today in ways which were not open to him in other days.

Let me try at the outset to give one designation or definition which shall apply to it all. It seems to me that what we want to say about the relation of the minister to the people now is that it is vastly more human and vastly less ecclesiastical than in the past. That is one result in which we may rejoice. There

are certain relations which men hold in view of their common humanity—relations between men of different kinds of intellect and of different stations in life; and all these are in the very nature of their human life. Now I conceive the Christian Church to be simply humanity struggling forward to the realization of its own ideal. I cannot conceive it to be something distinct from humanity. I think of it, when it has come to completion, as humanity come to its completion. The Christian Church has suffered all its worst effects and worst corruptions from separating itself from humanity. Whenever the Church has conceived of itself as possessing privileges which do not potentially belong to the whole human race, it has immediately sunk into corruption. The true and healthy Church, separating everything that is corrupt from its life—the true Church is simply humanity beginning its work, and gradually forming within itself a nucleus of that which is ultimately to embrace the whole human race.

When I say that the relation of the preacher has become more human, it seems to me that I say that this process is going forward, and that the Christian minister stands as a man toward men, as a man in

relation to his fellow-men, and not as the creature of some artificial organization. I wish I could make you bear that in mind as I go on. The relation between the Christian minister and the people who are around him is simply the relation between a certain man, put in a peculiar and helpful attitude to his fellow-men. It is not something organized by churches and councils, but is something rising from human nature itself.

What relation then does the minister hold with regard to the intelligence of the people around him? It is simply the attitude of one who, with superior opportunities, guides his fellow-men in their search for truth.

The function of the minister in relation to the intelligence of the people is threefold: To awaken their spiritual activity, to give them the results of his study, and to lift their life to the higher tone which Christianity assures. Look at each one of these three.

First, he is to awaken the spiritual activity, the insight, the real desire to know with regard to the highest things. When we look around upon our fellow-men, we see that the one thing that presses on us most is not the extent of men's ignorance: it is their

indifference. So many men are wrapped up in the things of the present life, that to all the vast region which we know exists beyond they are wholly indifferent. To awaken the spiritual sense, to make them care for unseen things, to make them long for some sort of entrance into that great reality which they feel around them—that is the great function of the Christian minister. Even if he had nothing distinctly to tell of certainty with regard to this truth, the mere awakening of men to search for religious truth in their own blind way would be one of the noblest things he could do.

Mr. Matthew Arnold a few months ago analyzed Mr. Emerson; and the result was this. He said that Mr. Emerson, although he might not be so great in some points as some of us thought, was great in this, that he was "the friend and helper of those who would live in the spirit." That criticism by Mr. Arnold of Mr. Emerson was very largely criticized. It seemed to some that he had degraded the philosopher. It seemed to me that this objection was a melancholy criticism upon our standards.

Is there a nobler thing than when a critic comes and says of him whom I reverence and honor that he

was the friend and helper of those who would live in the spirit? It seems to me that he said something infinitely greater than if he had said that he wrought the noblest system of philosophy that has been framed in the world. The man that is doing the best work for mankind today is the guide and friend of those who live in the spirit.

Then we may be able to take one step further, and know that there has been one manifestation of the spiritual life in this world that surpasses all other manifestations. Whatever may be our theological conceptions of Him, we know that Jesus Christ stands as the supreme inspirer of the spiritual life; and he who would be today the guide and friend of those who would live in the spirit must of necessity turn to Jesus Christ and put himself in relation to His spiritual life. There is where the minister becomes a Christian minister—in the simple desire, through contact with the life and work and death of Jesus Christ, to stir the soul and the spiritual life of man. The testimony of all ages is that there has been no such spiritual power as Jesus Christ.

This is the first work, then, of the minister, to reach the spiritual sense and to stir it to activity.

What is the second one? It is his duty to know something that those to whom he ministers do not know. Just as the professor in some department devotes himself to its study and gives to mankind what he finds in that department, so it would be a strange thing if a minister, set apart to study a special work, had not something to tell men which they did not know. Not that this implies any infallibility in the Christian minister, but simply the education of a consecrated life in the highest things which engage the intelligence of mankind. The minister who simply stands before men and says, "You must be spiritual, but I can tell you nothing about spiritual things," is absolutely false to his function. What may we tell men in regard to spiritual things? We may tell them how the whole history of mankind has been permeated and filled with spiritual things. We may show how mankind has always done the best in intellectual regions when it has been filled full of spiritual influence. We may scatter such a foolish belief as exists in men's minds today with regard to the possible extension of the Christian faith around the world; there are superficial objectors to missions who are ready to believe, without any just com-

parison, that there is a religion on the face of the earth today that can for a moment compare with the religion of Jesus Christ, in all its conceptions or forms, taken as one great whole. We may show how the history of the Christian Church is a necessary part of the intelligence of humanity today. These are but a part of the simple information, the mere instruction, which the Christian minister can give.

Then just one thing more. It is his place to elevate the tone of life everywhere; to bring it into contact with those sublime principles which are essential to humanity, which are struggling to the surface of human life everywhere, and have come to their best manifestations in Christianity—patience, long-suffering, large charity, and, above all things, hopefulness. The perpetual tendency of the world to lose its hopefulness is one of the things which the Christian minister, by every power in his life, is bound to resist. I can understand a Christian minister denying almost the essentials of the Christian faith; I can understand a minister teaching things from a Christian pulpit which I feel to be untrue; but I do not see how a man can take the place of a Christian minister unless he is inspired by a spirit of

deep hopefulness in regard to the human race, always believing that man is the child of God; that his fortunes are fastened to the deep fortunes of the world; and, unless the whole is rotten—unless there is nothing which has an assured future—man, bound by the conditions of his life, being a child of God, must be a creature of perpetual hope.

Now when one says to me that I have lost much that the Christian minister in other times used to have; when one says to me that I am not able to speak with the authority with which a Christian minister used to speak, so that my life is gone and my function is useless, I turn to these three things: It is my place to awaken and to make active the spiritual sense of men; to tell men everything that I have found with regard to spiritual truth, and to make men hope with every possible assertion of their relation to the highest and divinest which it is in my power to make.

Before I leave this first part of my subject, I cannot help saying that, after all, I myself feel that the relation to his people is not the deepest relation which a minister holds. Almost all the errors of the Christian ministry, almost all the heresies of the Christian Church, if we really retain that word in its true mean-

ing, have come from supposing that man's relation to his fellow-man may be superior to his loyalty to the truth. It is the reversal of that order again and again in Christian history that has led to the worst things that have happened to the Christian Church.

There was a time when men believed that they must assert certain doctrines which they only half held, because they thought that if those doctrines were not asserted men would go to ruin. Any man who rightly perceives the relation which mankind sustains to truth knows that this is an argument which had no place there. My business is to seek and find the truth, and to leave it to God to guard that it shall not ruin the lives of men.

Does not the same error appear also today upon the other side? When any man today makes less exacting, less earnest or imperative, any one of the statements of truth or divine justice and righteousness, in order that his fellow-men may be induced to do the less when he thinks that they will not be induced to do the greater; when any man pares down doctrine or truth, in order that men may be induced to believe that which alone he thinks they are fitted to believe—then it is sacrificing the love of truth for

the sake of men. No man has any right to make that which he believes to be the truth of God any less exacting, less sharp or clear, because he thinks his fellow-men will not accept it if he states it in its blankest and baldest form.

I read an incident in a newspaper the other day that seems to me to illustrate this point. A tired and dusty traveller was leaning against a lamp-post in the city of Rochester, and he turned and looked around him and said, "How far is it to Farmington?" and a boy in the crowd said, "Eight miles." "Do you think it is so far as that?" said the poor tired traveller. "Well, seeing that you are so tired, I will call it seven miles." The boy, with his heart overflowing with the milk of human kindness, pitied the exhausted traveller, and chose to call it seven miles. I know I have seen statements of the truth that have been dictated by the same motive. Never make the road from Rochester to Farmington seven miles, when you know it is eight. Do not do a wrong to truth out of regard for men.

There is another point, if one may speak out of his own ministry and from observation of the ministry of others: men do not *dread* to believe, men *long*

to believe. The one thing that we do not have to do is to pare down the truth for man's capacity to believe. Give them all the truth; you cannot make it too exacting. The whole of Christian history has been full of testimony that you may claim your fellow-men by virtue of the very imperiousness and absoluteness of that which they have been called upon to believe. The old *credo quia impossibile* of Tertullian had philosophy in it. Men long to believe; and, while ultimately every healthy human faculty will reject that which is not congenial to it, you cannot help men better than by laying before them all that which is true, even in its blankest and most-uncompromising form. Just as there are many men whom you cannot get to go down the street for you, but who would go half the way around the world for you if you needed it, so there are men who would not accept the truth which they felt had been pared down for them; but, when you put before them God in His eternity and infinitude and the soul in its vastness and mystery, then the power of belief, stirred to its greatest task, lifts itself up and does its work.

I pass now to something subordinate and inferior to the point in regard to the intelligence of men—

MISSOURI BAPTIST COLLEGE LIBRARY
POPLAR BLUFF, MISSOURI

the relation of the Christian minister to the property of those to whom he ministers. Many seem to think that he has the property of a large part of the community at his disposal; certainly of all that part of the community that is associated with him. If I were to do half the things with other people's money that I am asked to do every year, I should impoverish the city of Boston.

It seems to me that the minister is simply called upon to count his people as stewards of the Highest; not to be the distributor or almoner of other people's goods, but to make other men such, by the spiritual things which I have been trying to describe, that they shall enter into the privilege of putting that which has been intrusted to them to the highest use to which it can be employed. No man deals properly with a man until he accounts him more than his property. "I seek not yours, but you," said Paul. The spiritual life, the good of men, the good of the soul—that is the thing that the Christian minister is to seek.

Give yourself with your gift. Something is gained if you get a man's five hundred dollars here and there; but it is not the work of a Christian minister. Let other people go and beg for money without the

slightest regard of the way in which it is bestowed; but it is for the Christian minister to make a man know himself capable of consecration, and then to make him consecrate himself, which must include the property which he possesses. This, it seems to me, is the only definition which we can give of the relation of the Christian minister to the property of those to whom he ministers. He must work through the characters and natures of his people. Again and again a man has lost the power to do that work by the way in which he has been appealing to the individual. I will stand before my congregation and tell them of the glory of charity. I will tell them what a grand thing it is to give for God, then let them do the good for themselves, and go forth and give of their means; but I will not go to a man in any way that can possibly involve my personality, knowing that he will give out of friendship to me, and extort one dollar or five hundred from him for the best of objects.

And here, it seems to me, comes in one great function of the Christian minister that I hope all of you will not forget; which is that you must have such a large interest in great human necessities that you

should be able to inform those that are able to give how to bestow their goods. The Christian minister has no right to shut himself up in ecclesiastical interests. He is bound to consider everything that relates to humanity, and to consider that a dollar that is given to the sufferers in Louisville is as consecrated a dollar as that which is given for an altar or a font. The minister stands in a position in which he can bring information to men that they might not have otherwise. To bring that information by the powers which he can wield over the spiritual life, and to make men feel called to give just as soon as they see that they should give—that is all, it seems to me, that the Christian minister has to do with the property of the community.

And, if one can again bear testimony out of his own experience, I can say that there is a wonderful *readiness* to give. It seems to me that the one great thing that we lack is sufficient information in regard to the things to which money can be devoted. The advocate of every great cause is apt to be dishonest—unconsciously dishonest—and to represent his cause as greater in proportion than others around it. That is the way in which the minister can stand between

his people and such advocates, and show them the comparative importance of objects brought before them.

And now I pass to consider the relation of the Christian minister to the conscience of the community. The conscience of the community is nothing but the aggregate conscience of individuals. When we speak of that, we open a large and sometimes dark page of human history. We talk of the abuses of the priesthood in other times. I think we have no idea of the clamor which was made then upon the priests to guide other people's consciences. The Christian minister is not so much bound to refrain from asserting a claim upon the consciences of men as he is bound not to allow himself to be the master of their consciences. It is one of the embarrassments of the intelligent, spiritual minister that people are so ready to put their consciences under the control of others. I am sure if we could go back into the ages which we abuse most, the time when the priesthood set themselves over the consciences of men, we should find that the real trouble came from men and women who were seeking to be thus guided. It is the education of the great mass of the people so

that they have felt themselves called upon to accept the great responsibility of the guidance of their own consciences that has released the clergy, rather than the disposition of the clergy themselves.

Just as soon as we talk of the relation of the Church to the consciences of mankind, I suppose we are called upon to make that division which must always be made when we talk about sinfulness. There are two classes of wrong-doing, two classes of sin. One comprises those sins which have no intrinsic good, which are always wrong whenever they are done; the other comprises those things which are harmful to the individual soul or are harmful to other people, and are therefore not right to be done. There are certain things that no man, under any circumstances or in any age, should ever consider right to be done. There are some things of which, if a man should ask me why I do not do them, I should say, "They are absolutely wrong." Of other things I should say, "I know, if I did them, I should be a less upright, less holy man; and I know that I have no right to do them." "Do you pronounce them to be absolutely wrong?" "No." Some things are wrong in the eighteenth century which are not wrong in the

nineteenth. Complications of certain conditions may be harmful to the spiritual life—I mean, the best life of man. I do not use these words in an official sense. There are such things as the spiritual life of man and the consecration of the man's powers to spiritual things; and when anything becomes harmful to them, no man living has a right to do it.

Now let us consider what the Church and the minister have to do in regard to these sins. In the first place there are some things which, as already said, are absolutely wrong. Slavery, for instance, is absolutely wrong; it is to be rooted out. On the other hand, when the minister comes to deal with a sin which has an individual and personal character, there can be no such absolute statement, and the one great, sublime function of the Christian minister is the awakening of the individual conscience to examine its own obligations, to recognize its own sins. I think it is not good that any man should accept a duty simply or solely upon the word of another man. Duty is something never done, unless it is done out of a man's own conscience. For me to go to the slaveholder and say, "It is wrong to hold any man in bondage," and to have him answer, "I cannot think

so; but, since you think so, I will let them go free"
—how absolutely unsatisfactory that is! There ar
always such things in the life of the minister whe
he feels that a man's own conscience has not com
to have the fullest light and to work in the most legit
imate and healthful way. The danger of the min
ister and the Church is that they should be satisfie
with something or other short of the absolute per
suasion of the man's own conscience.

With regard to those other sins that have grow
out of the special complications of life, the work i
not so clear. It is not so satisfactorily recognizable
but it is just as truly the work of the minister. Le
me persuade the conscience of my fellow-man s
that it works truly, so that he has really tried to d
right, and I have done my total duty for that ma
And when he comes to a different judgment fro
me, although I cannot see how he can do it, yet as
minister I may rest absolutely satisfied with the tru
independent judgment of his own life.

Now is there not left here a function for the minis
ter? If our Christian Church, as a whole, could d
that for our community and nation today; could ca
upon it and persuade it to cast away those sins whic

re absolutely and certainly wrong, and, with regard o all doubtful questions, to enter into a searching xamination of them all and to act according to its est light, then the Christian minister would have egenerated our land. I do not believe that the hristian minister has a right to abdicate his func- on as the director of the human conscience; but it s important that he shall know that it is a living ing, and shall direct it as a living thing. Just as ou put every power of growth into a tree, and then t it grow according to its nature, so with the con- ience: we shall not bend it according to our con- eptions of the right, we shall simply inspire it with passion of righteousness, and then let it develop in s own true way. Here is a relation to the conscience hich is quite enough to occupy your thoughts, your arnest anxiety, and your time, so long as you are inisters.

Then come back to that which I said at the very eginning, that the Christian Church, however we ay talk of it distinctively, is nothing in the world xcept the first sketch of completed humanity. The hristian Church has nothing which is essential to s belief that all men ought not to be believing; it

has no duties resting upon its members that all m
ought not to be doing. Then I think we can see
relations truly to the community around us.

The majority of men do not today belong in ass
ciated relations to the Christian Church. What do
that mean? First, that the Christian Church h
not made itself broad enough to make earnest a
true men recognize the ideal of their humanity in
that it has been too special, too fantastic. Second
that it has a great work before it so to declare its h
man application that it shall commend itself to ev
man who really is in earnest in his thought and earn
in his deed. The Church seems to me to ha
that great function before it, and never to ha
had the possibility for the fulfilment of that duty
large and open before it in all the ages of its ex
ence as today. Therefore I would rather be a Ch
tian minister than anything else; and I welcome w
all my heart those of you who are preparing for t
good work.

THE RIGHT SORT OF MEN FOR THE MINISTRY

BY

WILLIAM FRASER McDOWELL

BISHOP OF THE METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH

NEW YORK

STUDENT YOUNG MEN'S CHRISTIAN ASSOCIATION

124 EAST TWENTY-EIGHTH STREET

1909

Copyright, 1909, by
The International Committee of Young Men's
Christian Associations

The Claims and Opportunities of the Christian Ministry

A SERIES OF PAMPHLETS
EDITED BY JOHN R. MOTT

THE RIGHT SORT OF MEN FOR THE MINISTRY

By WILLIAM FRASER McDOWELL

SERIES OF PAMPHLETS ON THE

CLAIMS AND OPPORTUNITIES OF THE CHRISTIAN MINISTRY

THE CLAIMS OF THE MINISTRY ON STRONG MEN
By GEORGE ANGIER GORDON

THE RIGHT SORT OF MEN FOR THE MINISTRY
By WILLIAM FRASER MCDOWELL

THE MODERN INTERPRETATION OF THE CALL TO THE MINISTRY
By EDWARD INCREASE BOSWORTH

THE PREPARATION OF THE MODERN MINISTER
By WALTER WILLIAM MOORE

THE MINISTER AND HIS PEOPLE
By PHILLIPS BROOKS

THE MINISTER AND THE COMMUNITY
By WOODROW WILSON

THE CALL OF THE COUNTRY CHURCH
By ARTHUR STEPHEN HOYT

THE WEAK CHURCH AND THE STRONG MAN
By EDWARD INCREASE BOSWORTH

THE MINISTER AS PREACHER
By CHARLES EDWARD JEFFERSON

LETTER FROM PRESIDENT ROOSEVELT
ON THE CALL OF THE NATION FOR ABLE MEN TO LEAD THE FORCES OF CHRISTIANITY

THE RIGHT SORT OF MEN FOR THE MINISTRY

The kind of men required for the ministry of to-day is determined by several capital considerations. What a strong man should do with his one life should always be decided on the basis of such considerations. The ministry must appeal to men at their best; their choices must be made at the highest and deepest levels of principle and life. Otherwise, manhood does not get its chance and the ministry misses that manhood which it must have. The ministry does not and can not make its appeal on the basis of its need. It can not demand strong men just because it has none; but must base its claim on fundamental and commanding principles. The best men must come in with their heads up and remain with a royal high-heartedness.

1. The kind of men now demanded in the ministry is determined by the character of the Person and institution whose ministers the men are to be. Small

employers can take small employees. Little institutions can get along with little men. Empires must have emperors. Kingdoms must have kings. Kings are "men who can." The imperial state has the right to the services of her strong sons. The emperor, the king, the president has the right to call to the service of the commonwealth her able men. And the ablest men are honored by such call. England had a war in South Africa which many Englishmen and many others regarded as a very bad war. In the midst of it Lord Salisbury, the Prime Minister, said to Lord Roberts, England's chief soldier: "We have discovered that this war depends on the generals." And England sent Lord Roberts and Lord Kitchener, her greatest generals, to the front. England honored them in so doing. Our own national history is full of such instances. Our current history is illuminated by such cases.

Now the Church at its best is the chief institution in the world today. Even at its worst, it is the chief institution in the world. The world's fate for good or ill is more dependent upon the Church of Jesus Christ than upon any government or all governments. The imperial Church has a right to the

services of imperial people. The great institution naturally calls for the great personality.

The Church ranks any government or institution in the strength and sovereignty of its call, but when one considers that it is Jesus Christ's Church a new situation is created. "Ministers of Jesus Christ" is a royal term. Presidents, kings, and emperors are not to be compared with Him, of course, but the analogy holds clear through. He has the supreme right, because of what He is, to the ablest men that can be found. The character of Jesus Christ determines the claims of the ministry on the strongest men. It claims them, not because men now in the ministry are weak, but because it is His ministry and He is sovereign over life. John Hay could give up every other occupation, however alluring, because McKinley and Roosevelt and the Republic needed him. He counted himself honored that he was thus wanted. Phillips Brooks could give up everything else, however attractive, because the universal Church and Jesus Christ its Head needed him in the ministry. It sets one's blood flowing fast to think of the ministry in this light. It is the ministry of Jesus Christ, the Master. What He is determines the

kind of men it must have. The light in which we decide is the light of His face. In that light the ministry is set on high, far above all ordinary occupations.

There is no argument with Him. He possesses what Matthew Arnold called invincible supremacy. Whatever He says must be done. In the presence of others men stand; when He enters they must kneel. Charles Lamb was right about that. Those personal incidents there in the gospels are thrilling to this day. The personal element is so large in them. Here sits a man collecting taxes, not a very choice, but probably profitable business. The very noblest Person in any world comes past this man at his desk and says in substance: "Matthew, do you want a chance to be a different man, to go with me, to help me do the best thing ever done? If you do, come along with me." Or there are those fishing men, the salt of the earth from Peter to Fishin' Jimmy. Into their lives comes this same best Person saying: "Do you really want to do a big man's work in the world or on the sea? You are catching fish for a few pence a day. Come with me and catch men and the wages will be life eternal." There is

no emphasis on profession. The whole emphasis is personal. The rich ruler missed his chance.

Still the supreme and sovereign Christ is looking into the faces of men, strong men drawn to business, and making this personal appeal. Still He is asking them to come with Him to help Him do His work. He is always facing a crisis and needing strong men to help Him. How will they get into the new Gospel that is forever being written?

2. The character of the men demanded for the ministry is determined by the service which they are asked to render. The ministry proposes a larger service to humanity than ever before. We speak sometimes of a decline in the relative importance of the clergyman in the community. This is misleading. As society grows stronger and life richer the place of a true minister becomes absolutely much more important. His place is much stronger because he is not so solitary. The strong man is made stronger by the multiplication of strong men about him.

Jesus Christ does not and could not ask strong men to give their lives to small service. Large men can not be asked to link their lives to small affairs.

Wholesale men are perverted if they are kept forever in retail business. Statesmen have no right to be crowded into petty politics. Merchant princes must not be limited to clerkships. Imperial personalities must be given imperial tasks.

Now the ministry has not always seemed a commanding thing. But when we apply to it the great terms that link it with the best conceptions and illustrations of the ministry at its best; and when we bring this conception of the ministry face to face with the present tasks of the ministry, no true man can feel it to be an inferior thing, too small for him. He will the rather humble himself in the presence of what must be done, and cry out, "Who is sufficient for these things?"

What are these great terms? We still use the three words, prophetic, apostolic, and Christlike, to indicate our supreme conception of what a minister ought to be. Not every man in the ministry is a prophetic man, or an apostolic man, or a Christlike man; and young men are tempted to interpret the ministry by lesser types and to misjudge it because of the small men in it. Then some day a living man appears to whom these three great terms

may all be truly applied, and the hearts of youth leap up because the ministry is reincarnated again in their presence. And youth cries out in joy that the thing has come again. Then all the small discussions about the smaller matters of the ministry are hushed, for there it is in a prophetic, apostolic, Christlike man living before men and doing his work. Mr. Bryce declared that the character of George Washington determined the powers lodged in the presidency by the makers of our constitution. They interpreted the office in the terms of the man who sat there before them. For them he was the presidency. When my contemporaries were defining the ministry for themselves in the days of their youth, Phillips Brooks was doing that for them. It was not the question when we saw him whether the ministry was big enough for the strongest man. It was the question whether the strongest man could come anywhere near worthiness to stand in a profession which he was glorifying.

A highly gifted young man, a graduate of a great American university, remarked one day that his mind was clear on one point, namely, that the noblest callings are those which pursue the study of

men and life. Said he: "Some devote themselves to insects, others to fishes, others still to rocks and fossils, and yet others to planets and stars, but none of these appeal to me as do those callings which have to do with human life, human character, and human society." The human note is the tremendous thing in our whole modern conception of the ministry. Never was the ministry so human. It is getting into its Master's footsteps.

The ministry is not a place in which to earn a living, but an opportunity for doing a work. Henry van Dyke dedicates one of his books to the late Dean Murray, whom he called "a teacher of literature and life, a preacher of righteousness and love, a servant of humanity and Christ." But one who is such a teacher and such a preacher and such a servant must himself be a man of literature and life, a man of righteousness and love, a man of humanity, a Christ-like man. And the task of the ministry is the task of becoming a personality possessing truth, a personality having a transforming knowledge of things divine and human and a transfiguring acquaintance with Jesus Christ as the conditions precedent to the fulfillment of his task.

The ministry was once individualistic in its object. It sought the redemption of the individual man. And all this was good; it never was anything but good; it never can be anything but good. The personal Christ and the individual man must still be brought together so that Christ will possess the man and the man will possess the Christ. But the significance of the individual has not been lost but multiplied by the discovery of his tremendous social significance and worth. The value of a human soul, upon which our fathers laid great stress, is multiplied by our discovery of the individual's place in the Kingdom. We have not made men less, but made them more, by the new social emphasis. We have pressed our ministry full of a meaning, that in certain ages was undreamed of, by the swelling, expanding, social movement of our times. To redeem an individual from sin is a task that well might occupy an angel's hands. To set a redeemed individual at the task of redeeming society also, is immeasurably larger. Add to all this that in our day Christ's plans for world conquest are for the first time clearly seen, and the character of the ministry gets an added dignity. One harks back to old

days and feels that if he had had a chance in those older days he would have leaped at it. If he had heard the Master say as to Matthew, "Follow me," one is sure that he would have insisted upon a chance to join Matthew in the Master's service. The best of us feel that if we had had the opportunity offered to the rich young ruler we would have cried out to the Master, "If he will not go, take me, and give me that chance that he is shirking." He feels that if he could have taken St. Paul's place, nothing could have kept him out of it; or Augustine's or Savonarola's or Luther's or Wesley's or any one of those great historic opportunities upon which we dwell.

But it is a very poor view of inspiration that limits it to the inspiration of far-off men in far-off times, and a very poor view of the Kingdom that does not see that the Kingdom is always a bigger and a better thing, and that it is always offering bigger and better chances. Washington's chance did not equal Lincoln's, Lincoln's did not equal Roosevelt's. The opportunity of St. Paul did not surpass the opportunity of a hundred modern men whose names leap to my lips. His missionary journeys round the Mediterranean were of immense, and have proved

of world significance; but there are men in India, in China, in Africa, in America today from whom Jesus Christ expects a larger service than he expected from any of the preaching St. Paul did. Every day of my life in my prayers I speak the names of men who seem to me to stand in such relation to the Kingdom of God as has never been surpassed by any men in any century.

We have come to a new and better conception of Christ. We have come to a new and better conception of humanity. The times are big with the opportunities to interpret Christ to the individual, to society, and to the world. And the Kingdom is not likely to fail because it gets into it men who are too large for these opportunities. It will fail, if it fails at all, because the men are too small for the enterprise.

A church with a weak ministry can never touch strong men with power; can never Christianize society; can never maintain life at its highest or keep truth and education on the throne; can never create and preserve philanthropy in power and warmth. The service of man will run low and become feeble when feeble men control the ministry. The mission-

ary movement is attracting able men and well it may, but the strength of that movement is in the pulpit of the Church at home more than anywhere else.

The service of humanity for the love of Christ, this is the appeal. The service is noble and the motive compelling. The thing is big enough to do and the motive for doing it big enough to warrant either master or men giving life to it. John Hay can not give his best years to secure the open door in China simply in order that American merchants can sell a little more merchandise. The motive is too small for that burden. Our best men can not give themselves to the Philippines just to get back the money we paid for the islands. The motive will not bear the burden. The motive of the statesman must be shot through with liberty and uplift and justice for all men. The motive for the ministry is not large enough if it be either a commercial or a denominational or a selfish motive. The ministry must be shot through with sacrifice and service. Its symbol must be the cross. This opens a career surpassing any other in life, as the interests of mankind surpass all other concerns.

3. The kind of men required for the ministry is determined also by the times in which one is to have his ministry. The Master always remains the same. The Gospel in its essence does not change. The Gospel is large because universal and eternal. Christ is worth serving because He is the sovereign figure of every age. The Gospel is vital because it is always timely and everywhere potent.

Ages are not alike, nor are they simple. No one term characterizes any period. Every quality is ever present, not always in the same proportion or balance. Many terms have been applied to our times. The age has been called the age of doubt, of inquiry, of science, of faith, of missions, of commerce, and of expansion. These are a few of the terms. They are all true and no one of them true as an exclusive description. The age has been pronounced self-absorbed, self-centered, and self-sufficient. A recent writer declares that our time is characterized by "triviality, uncertainty and complacency." "This is the junction of the capitalist and socialist ages."

Probably all this is true. It is certainly true that it is a great age and shows no sign of growing less within the generation. It is a fine time for the right

kind of man to live in. It is a royal time for a physician. All the ages of medicine and surgery have led to this. It is a thrilling time for a teacher. No period from Socrates to Arnold has equalled it. The new science alone would make a teacher's opportunity notable. It is a commanding time for merchants if they are big enough; ability has not had such a chance since men began to trade. It is a superb day for the inventor. He works some new miracles every month. The ministry of this day is surrounded by giants. No other age since men began to preach has offered such a challenge or such a chance to a royal pulpit. Who wants to be a king among pigmies? Who wants to be a leader of weaklings? Who wants to bring an eternal Gospel to a petty period full of petty men? Modern life is going to be rich, to be instructed, to be skillful. If this great life fails at all, it will be in character.

Every age will surely have its gospel. Ours has tried several—the gospel of science, the gospel of wealth, and even the gospel of pleasure. It cares for none of them. Now when the age reacts who will lead it into truth? Who will preach the eternally living Christ to the men of today, in modern speech,

for imperative needs? Who will get such a hearing in modern Babel as to change Babel to Pentecost? Who can make room for himself and get a hearing in our modern crowd? Who can lead among so many leaders? Who can recall men to the glories and values of things invisible in the face of modern wealth and comfort? Who can effectively preach to modern men and women of culture the truth that frees? Who can fill the modern social and political spirit with the mind of Christ? Who can face and conquer the monster evils of current life? Who can take this vast, complex modern age and unify its qualities, not destroy them but fulfill them in Christ? Who can help Him to bring all these tremendous qualities into subjugation and captivity and thus to true power in Himself?

He waits for such men that they may help Him in the finest struggle His Kingdom has ever seen. Age of Constantine, Age of Charlemagne, Age of Crusader, Age of Reformer—no one of them equals this for the ministry of Christ. The great Person, Christ; the great service, for humanity; the great age, for life! The hour of the strong man has come.

THE CALL OF THE COUNTRY CHURCH

BY

ARTHUR STEPHEN HOYT

PROFESSOR IN THE THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY
AT AUBURN

NEW YORK
STUDENT YOUNG MEN'S CHRISTIAN ASSOCIATION
124 EAST TWENTY-EIGHTH STREET
1909

Copyright, 1909, by
The International Committee of Young Men's
Christian Associations

The Claims and Opportunities of the Christian Ministry

A SERIES OF PAMPHLETS
EDITED BY JOHN R. MOTT

THE CALL OF THE COUNTRY CHURCH

By ARTHUR STEPHEN HOYT

SERIES OF PAMPHLETS ON THE

CLAIMS AND OPPORTUNITIES OF THE CHRISTIAN MINISTRY

THE CLAIMS OF THE MINISTRY ON STRONG MEN
By GEORGE ANGIER GORDON

THE RIGHT SORT OF MEN FOR THE MINISTRY
By WILLIAM FRASER MCDOWELL

THE MODERN INTERPRETATION OF THE CALL TO THE MINISTRY
By EDWARD INCREASE BOSWORTH

THE PREPARATION OF THE MODERN MINISTER
By WALTER WILLIAM MOORE

THE MINISTER AND HIS PEOPLE
By PHILLIPS BROOKS

THE MINISTER AND THE COMMUNITY
By WOODROW WILSON

THE CALL OF THE COUNTRY CHURCH
By ARTHUR STEPHEN HOYT

THE WEAK CHURCH AND THE STRONG MAN
By EDWARD INCREASE BOSWORTH

THE MINISTER AS PREACHER
By CHARLES EDWARD JEFFERSON

LETTER FROM PRESIDENT ROOSEVELT
ON THE CALL OF THE NATION FOR ABLE MEN TO LEAD THE FORCES OF CHRISTIANITY

LIBRARY
SOUTHERN [illegible] COLLEGE
WALNUT RIDGE, ARK.

THE CALL OF THE COUNTRY CHURCH

The country church offers a field of special importance. In the country the family, the very unit of society, is felt to be more sacred, the ties are stronger, and there is chance for more distinct and consistent training. Life lies open to the sun and to the eyes of men, and the very forces of nature teach the democracy of honest toil. Custom and public opinion are not so sharp and arbitrary and men grow independent in judgment and action. They are thrown upon their own resources and they have the flavor of individuality. Men know each other and have kindly interest in each other and the expression of sympathy is natural and spontaneous. And these qualities of individual worth and social stability have been largely trained by the influences of the country church. Religion has quickened and sanctified these natural forces of country life.

The church, from the beginning, has been pecu-

liarly the centre of the community. The minister has been able to know men individually, to be a friend to each person in his parish, to touch them the most vitally, actually to have the moulding of character, without the manifold distractions and opposing forces of the city. And from country churches have gone forth the leading men and women of the nation. A single country church of Central New York in a single generation sent seven of its sons into the ministry, and a score of capable and energetic laymen to strengthen the life of as many city churches.

The country church offers a field of special need. Country life has changed greatly in the memory of living men, in all the older states, and the same forces are now working in the Middle West. There has been an unmistakable loss of unity, both social and religious. Invention applied to agriculture has released three men out of four on the farm, and they have followed the gravitation to the city or to newer lands. The young, the ambitious have often gone, leaving the aged, the less progressive, and the ne'er-do-wells. With the loss of population have been the depreciation of farm values and the increase of tenant farms and large farms. Foreigners have partly

taken the place of the native stock. There has been a loss of social power in these rapid changes of country life.

These changes have affected the country church. The average rural congregation is smaller than a generation ago. Through the loss of old families, the church is left with crippled means and finds a growing difficulty in settling a well-trained man. So a stable ministry, with its pervasive and unifying influence, has often yielded to a transient or at most a yearly supply, of necessity, brief and superficial in effect. Sectarian rivalries add to the difficulty of the country problem. Churches that once had a fair field now struggle for life and they are tempted to think of their own life more than their ministry to the Kingdom of God. And many communities are suffering a spiritual lapse because three or four feeble churches are competitors in the same field in the place of a single, comprehensive church, its members self-reverencing and reverencing each.

And then the country church faces the fact of the unchurched masses, the foreigners who have taken possession of the old farms, and the lapsed Americans of Christian ancestry. The frontiers are every-

where, not alone in new states, but close about many old centres. A newly installed country pastor of Central New York recently found forty-seven families, chiefly American, within three miles of his church, without religious convictions or habits. The case of Middleboro, Massachusetts, is not unlike that of many other townships, fifteen churches representing eight denominations, and two thirds of the population without affiliation with any of the churches. It is a moderate estimate to say that one fourth of our country population is today beyond the direct influence of the Church, a greater aggregate than the pagans of our cities.

The country church has been extremely conservative both in teachings and methods. It has not adapted itself to the changed social needs, and has suffered other agencies, as the grange and the lodge, to usurp its place of leadership. As means of instruction have increased, the pulpit has not kept its intellectual position. Its teachings have not frankly met the new light on the problems of nature and life. The church has depended too much upon spasmodic revivals and not on daily ministrations; it has drawn false distinctions in life by hard and fast rules, and

not dwelt upon the great principles of the Gospel. These tendencies have acted with the natural economic and social changes for a partial decline of the country church.

The problem of rural life must be of serious import to all Christian patriots. Religion is the cohesive force of society. The frontiers of any country are its weakest places morally, and its most dangerous characters are there. The isolation of the country tends to develop forceful characters for good or ill. "Isolation," said Burke, "is the mother of barbarism." The recovery and development of country life is the problem. American Christianity may have its hardest task in imparting recuperative force to its partially spent communities.

What sort of a man should answer the call of the country church? He should be a man who loves the out-door world, who loves its freedom and beauty and growth. If he finds recreation with rod or gun all the better; anything that takes him far afield will give him the sense of kinship with nature. It will keep his body strong and his mind sane, and he will find some of his best sermons in the fields, for he will hear the Master speak as He did in the cornfields.

He should be a man who has deep human interest, who can see true human worth behind rough faces and hard conditions. He must be one who tries to make friends, who knows each member of his parish, who concerns himself with all that touches their life. He should know the work of the country and not be afraid to take a hand; a distant, clerical garbed, kid-gloved ministry is peculiarly a misfit in the simplicity and freedom of country life.

As a preacher, he should have the teacher's gift and make the most of the teaching ministry. Country people can appreciate good preaching and in the past have had their share of it. But the preacher is the teacher far more than the orator. And the pastor in the country where there are fewer agencies of education than in the city, owes it to his people to make his pulpit instructive and to make the life of the church, not only a religious force, but a means of intellectual and social culture.

He should be a man who has the missionary spirit, who shall make his little church feel itself a vital part of the Kingdom, who shall help to the largeness of mind and life that comes from the sense of contact with the world. And like the true shepherd, he

should seek the wandering and scattered sheep, and carry the word to every person of the community.

And finally he should be a man with the social consciousness. It is significant that a country church of Iowa recently asked for a man who had the training of a social settlement. Dr. W. H. Jordan, director of the New York Agricultural Experiment Station at Geneva, says that he would have every country pastor take at least one year in an agricultural college. Both are significant of the fact that life is organic and that the whole life is to be understood and helped. Social methods are just as necessary and helpful to the country church as to the one in the city. The man with a sense of pure neighborliness, patience to understand conditions, love that will serve all the sides of human life and will make the Gospel touch every side and province of man's nature, will find the country church a field of never-ending interest, and one that demands and repays the very best that he can give.

THE CLAIMS OF THE MINISTRY ON STRONG MEN

BY

GEORGE ANGIER GORDON

MINISTER AT THE OLD SOUTH CHURCH, BOSTON

NEW YORK

STUDENT YOUNG MEN'S CHRISTIAN ASSOCIATION

124 EAST TWENTY-EIGHTH STREET

1909

The Claims and Opportunities of the Christian Ministry

A SERIES OF PAMPHLETS
EDITED BY JOHN R. MOTT

THE CLAIMS OF THE MINISTRY ON STRONG MEN

By GEORGE ANGIER GORDON

SERIES OF PAMPHLETS ON THE

CLAIMS AND OPPORTUNITIES OF THE CHRISTIAN MINISTRY

THE CLAIMS OF THE MINISTRY ON STRONG MEN
By GEORGE ANGIER GORDON

THE RIGHT SORT OF MEN FOR THE MINISTRY
By WILLIAM FRASER MCDOWELL

THE MODERN INTERPRETATION OF THE CALL TO THE MINISTRY
By EDWARD INCREASE BOSWORTH

THE PREPARATION OF THE MODERN MINISTER
By WALTER WILLIAM MOORE

THE MINISTER AND HIS PEOPLE
By PHILLIPS BROOKS

THE MINISTER AND THE COMMUNITY
By WOODROW WILSON

THE CALL OF THE COUNTRY CHURCH
By ARTHUR STEPHEN HOYT

THE WEAK CHURCH AND THE STRONG MAN
By EDWARD INCREASE BOSWORTH

THE MINISTER AS PREACHER
By CHARLES EDWARD JEFFERSON

LETTER FROM PRESIDENT ROOSEVELT
ON THE CALL OF THE NATION FOR ABLE MEN TO LEAD THE FORCES OF CHRISTIANITY

THE CLAIMS OF THE MINISTRY UPON STRONG MEN

By strong men, I mean persons of intellectual power, who are at the same time persons of high moral ideals and intense moral enthusiasms. By the ministry, I mean the service of a Christian preacher in some one of the various churches of our time. If our men of intellectual power are not at the same time men of high moral ideals and intense moral enthusiasms, the ministry has no claims upon them. It does not want them; they are not fitted to teach religion because they are not experts in it. They are not experts because they are without first-hand, abundant, and joyous knowledge of it. Such persons become, by their intellectual power, a damaging influence upon religion; they lead the public to think that the intellect has little or nothing to do with religion; they stimulate a revolt against reason and a return to fanaticism. It must be repeated, therefore, that our strong man is one whose chief in-

terest in life is moral and spiritual. He is one whose governing aspiration is for excellence of being, high bearing in his relations with men and with God. A young man of intellectual power may be sure of his fitness for the ministry if his whole heart kindles into flame as he reads and ponders these words: "Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled."

The first reason why young men of this character should enter the ministry is found in the fact that religion is a fundamental human interest, and should not be allowed to rest in incompetent hands. We know what happens when other great human interests are left in incompetent hands. What would become of the community if the practice of medicine should fall into the hands of quacks? Here we are swift, and yet none too swift, to see the calamity that would follow if this vast interest should be committed to ignorant and perverse men. The same issue of woe is inevitable when economics, art, science, sanitation, government, and philosophy are intrusted to the incompetent. Respecting all human interests, we may use the words of the Hebrew seer: "Woe to thee, O land, when thy king is a child." That is

always a calamity, and the greater the interest thus outraged, the greater the woe.

Religion is the sovereign interest of man. It is the strongest force in human history, it is the deepest fact in human nature. Modern scholars have brought us face to face with the universality and the momentousness of religion. There are today many great living religions; they attest the religious nature of the race to which we belong. Modern scholars have not only shown us with convincing power the universality and vitality of religion; they have shown us also the tendency of great religions to degenerate. This degeneration has run riot in all the greater religions of the East; it has run riot in Christianity. The most tragic chapter in the history of Europe is that which records the confusion of Christianity with alien and inferior cults, the resolution of the sublime religion of Jesus Christ into a vast compound of the true and the false, of the credible and the incredible. This degeneration has been brought upon the Gospel of Christ because the teachers and preachers of Christ's religion have been, in many cases, unequal to the trust committed to them. This degeneration has been brought upon the Gospel of

Christ chiefly because, in some communions some of the time and in other communions all of the time, teachers and preachers of the Gospel have been conspicuously incompetent. Who can stand in the Church of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem, and witness the service there, without inexpressible sorrow, without confessing his inability to find in the degraded religion even the marred features of the religion of Jesus? The ministers who conduct that ceremonial are sincere but ignorant, devout but fanatical, loyal to the supreme human interest but infinitely incompetent. If it were music that men thus shamefully treated, or painting, or sculpture, or building, or poetry, or history, or science, the world would break forth in ridicule and scorn. When it is religion, the world suffers in silence over this degeneration and woe.

Preachers are needed who are qualified to teach the ideas of Jesus. His idea of man personal and social, His idea of God in His relation to men and races of men, His vision of eternal life in this temporal world and His conception of the kingdom of Infinite Love, are of supreme concern to our modern world. Is it not worth while to perpetuate this high

teaching? And do we not need men of power for this service?

The work of the preacher is not exhausted in the office of teacher. His great aim in the presentation of ideas is to affect the heart. His chief purpose is to make character after the type of Jesus Christ. The success of this endeavor is essential to the life of civilized man. And only men great in character can render this supremely desirable and supremely difficult service; only they can create character of their own type; only they can fashion the hearts of men after the pattern of Jesus Christ.

The preacher sets himself to continue in the earth the Master's work of mercy. There is the army of the unsuccessful, the host caught and overwhelmed in the tragedy of the world, the multitude left behind and abandoned to their fate by those who ride in the triumphant chariots of progress; and, besides, there is the multitude of those that mourn, whose love is lost and whose hope is dead. Here is a region of life known to few as it is to the Christian minister. Here the sympathies and the wise services of a great nature act like the strong sunshine upon the earth in the grip of winter. Here the wilderness and the

solitary place rejoice, and the desert blossoms as the rose. Here the tradition of Christ's compassion repeats itself, and in so doing renews the immemorial miracle of the upright and loving soul.

To bring in a great fellowship among men and between men and God is the comprehensive aim of the preacher. To use in the interest of this high fellowship the gift of the teacher, the function of the maker of character, the office of the priestly soul, calls for strong men. The best word that I recall from my seminary days is the word of a Methodist preacher: "God and a fool might do as much good in the world as God and a wise man, but they have never done it." They never will do it. If our religion is to be great and to do great things, it must be in the care of great souls—souls great in illumination and in intense and pure desire.

A second reason why young men of power should enter the ministry is found in the fact that strong men have been in this service from the beginning, and that strong men are in it today. The degeneration that I have referred to in history has been often resisted by these strong men, and, when it could not be wholly checked, it has been mitigated by them.

The degeneration that we all fear is now, in a large and hopeful way, held back by men of strength. This apostolic succession in the past pleads for renewal in the finest youth of today. This company of brave, contemporary servants of the supreme interest of society sends forth its appeal for reinforcements.

Strong men have served in this vocation—that proposition is not open to doubt. A Christian preacher first introduced to Europe, to the Gentile world, the distinctive element in our civilization. The greatest man that ever sailed the Mediterranean Sea was not Pericles, nor Alexander, nor Hannibal, nor Cæsar, but Paul. His shadow lies upon Europe as does that of no other man in its history. When Europe began to renew her life in the sixteenth century, it was a Christian preacher who led the way. Our freedom began, not with any scientist, philosopher, man of letters, or man of affairs. It began with Martin Luther. We recall Origen, Athanasius, Augustine, Wyckliffe, Calvin, Knox, Edwards, Channing, Parker, Bushnell, Beecher, Brooks, and through them we recall a host that no man can number who in the vocation of the preacher have wrought

righteousness in the earth, and in the hearts of men have been as the flood-tide of divine regard.

That strong men are in this service today is frequently called in question. Today, it is said, the Church has golden chalices and wooden priests. There is doubtless some ground for this complaint. It originated, I believe, with Savonarola, and we know that it was the truth and no slander upon his lips. It was the habitual complaint of Emerson, although, when in the Harvard Divinity School, Emerson uttered this complaint for the last time, Henry Ward Beecher was preaching in Brooklyn and Phillips Brooks was preaching in Boston. The Church has not always had golden chalices, but from the days of the Apostles she has never been without wooden priests. If I am to judge from my own observation, extending now over many years, I must conclude that on the average there is more sense and reason, more genuine piety and wholesome human feeling, more effective administration and intense devotion among American preachers than at any other period of my existence. The shining names, the great national personalities, may be absent. The preacher is subject to the limitation that always overtakes

the specialist. The increased division of labor has further reduced his importance. The passing of all regard for mere officialism has taken with it a vast rubbish heap that in other days glittered like gold. These things do not count in a fair estimate. The ministry has men in it today of whom any calling might well be proud. In college they proved themselves, in many cases, the equals of their fellows. Their subsequent career has been that of the lover and servant of truth; and to stand among these men in this service is a dishonor to no thinker, to no scholar, to no personality, however great.

I sometimes think that a profession is in the healthiest condition, not when general attention is fixed upon its great names, but when the public is disposed to deny the existence in it of great names. Men do their best work, as a rule, before they become famous. The fame of great men, great universities, and great nations, is not without serious peril. All over this broad land today preachers of the Gospel are studying and thinking and living as ministers in great numbers have done at no time since the Apostolic Age. They have inherited only dis-

credited systems of opinion and vast masses of unwinnowed learning. Under these conditions, they have had to provide for their people the vision of God and life's supreme consolation. They have become, by scores and hundreds, under this discipline, men of originality and depth, of great character and precious influence. It is never just or safe to argue from the absence of fame. The still small voice is the mightiest force in human history. At fitting seasons, and under the provocation of excessive contempt, it may become, as in a Luther or a Knox, a voice like the sound of many waters. Famous Russia was defeated by Japan, a nation largely without fame. Power in the end wins recognition; but, if it be power aside from the kinds usually admired, it may have long to wait. Because it is not recognized, it would be unjust and unsafe to conclude that it does not exist. While men sleep the tide rolls to the flood; while men prate about the absence of power in the ministry today, that power is rising in a mighty silent service. Meanwhile we poor, brainless preachers are strong enough to do our work as in our great Taskmaster's eye, and quick enough to find food for mirth in the haughty manner of our

critics. We know them well; we love them well; and the fear of them in no wise disturbs us.

It may be further said that the satisfactions of the ministry are such as appeal to strong men. Upon this point there is again some doubt. It is believed in certain quarters that preachers live sheltered lives, that they feed upon nothing but indiscriminate and foolish praise. A year or two in this vocation would, I am sure, be sufficient to dissipate this illusion. When in 1875 I went as a home missionary to Temple, Maine, the first compliment I received at the close of my first sermon was from a veteran of the War of 1812, and it ran thus: "Elder, I like to hear you preach. I have had the best sleep today that I have had in a month. Your voice reminds me of my mother's lullaby." Those who think ministers never hear the truth about their work are greatly mistaken. They have yet to discover that piety carries in it, now and then, an immense aptitude for imparting information with a sting in it. Manly men in the ministry get their full share of honest and rough treatment from their fellow-men. I discover no immunity for the preacher here, and, therefore, offer no bribe. Indeed, the memory of

any minister of considerable experience is rich in examples to the contrary, and they are part of the fun of living.

Nor is there any chance for a minister to become rich. In comparison with many other vocations, preachers are poorly paid, and when the preacher's salary is large, as it sometimes is, the human suffering and the great causes of human enlightenment and relief appeal to him with irresistible power, and thus absorb much of his income. Neither dignity in the general regard nor wealth is among the inducements to enter the ministry. There are, however, other inducements that sing in the wholesome human heart.

There is the satisfaction of a noble service, one into which an honest man may put his entire nature. When the day's work is done, the worthy minister may enjoy the reflection of having done much for which he has received no pay—much for which there will never be the least material reward. He may know that he has served his Father in secret because of his love for the service. The chance to do that is the exclusive privilege of no profession; but in the ministry it is, I believe, larger than in any other.

This habit of doing good, with no prospect or thought of material reward, sets free in a man's heart singing voices; and the music they make is not of this world.

Another immense satisfaction of the preacher is the love that he may awaken in others for the highest things. Here we meet the teacher's satisfaction. One cannot think of Socrates walking the streets of Athens with a band of elect youth about him, careless of dress and money and the poor prizes of the world, turning the thought of his generation to the dignity of the intellectual life, without seeing in that great rough face the light of a mighty satisfaction. And in the sphere of the spirit, in the same vocation, we meet Jesus. We see His soul in His eyes as He looks upon those whose love for the Eternal He has kindled. We hear Him say over one poor, wretched life that He had brought back to honor, "I have meat to eat that ye know not of." Such satisfactions all genuine servants of the mind and spirit will always have.

There is still another satisfaction in the minister's life. I mean his unique relation to his kind. He is with his people in the great crises of life. His sympathies enfold the families committed to his care

when children are born, when they are dedicated by their parents in baptism to the Highest, when these children grow up and enter the glorious but perilous world of youth, when they, in turn, build homes of their own; and again in anxiety, in misfortune, in bitter grief, and in death the heart of a worthy minister of Christ is with his people. All this issues in a relation to human beings absolutely unique in this world.

The last satisfaction to which I call attention is that of overcoming difficulties. The ministry is classed economically among the non-productive professions. The clergyman's salary is provided from the savings of others who serve in the productive professions. The stipend is not usually large; it is somewhat uncertain. The minister's tenure of office is also uncertain. Altogether, these facts are apt to chill young men as they look forward to this service. This should not be. These are difficulties to be met and overcome. They may be overcome by the creative spirit of love. Some men have the power to open new industries, to get others to believe in them, and thus to add to the productive power of society. These men are leaders in creative indus-

try. Similar to these men are those preachers who by the power of a great nature create new interest in divine things. Men of this stamp make themselves and their cause essential to the hearts and the happiness of their parishes. They become part of the life of their people, and in consequence their income, while not large, is sufficient and sure. Men of power have made the world: they will continue to make it; and, if the ministry is an unsatisfactory profession today, men of power should enter it, and shape its character by their creative spirit.

THE MODERN INTERPRETATION OF THE CALL TO THE MINISTRY

BY

EDWARD INCREASE BOSWORTH

DEAN OF OBERLIN THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

NEW YORK

STUDENT YOUNG MEN'S CHRISTIAN ASSOCIATION

124 EAST TWENTY-EIGHTH STREET

1909

Copyright, 1909, by
The International Committee of Young Men's
Christian Associations

The Claims and Opportunities of the Christian Ministry

A SERIES OF PAMPHLETS
EDITED BY JOHN R. MOTT

THE MODERN INTERPRETATION OF THE CALL TO THE MINISTRY

By EDWARD INCREASE BOSWORTH

SERIES OF PAMPHLETS ON THE

CLAIMS AND OPPORTUNITIES OF THE CHRISTIAN MINISTRY

THE CLAIMS OF THE MINISTRY ON STRONG MEN
By GEORGE ANGIER GORDON

THE RIGHT SORT OF MEN FOR THE MINISTRY
By WILLIAM FRASER MCDOWELL

THE MODERN INTERPRETATION OF THE CALL TO THE MINISTRY
By EDWARD INCREASE BOSWORTH

THE PREPARATION OF THE MODERN MINISTER
By WALTER WILLIAM MOORE

THE MINISTER AND HIS PEOPLE
By PHILLIPS BROOKS

THE MINISTER AND THE COMMUNITY
By WOODROW WILSON

THE CALL OF THE COUNTRY CHURCH
By ARTHUR STEPHEN HOYT

THE WEAK CHURCH AND THE STRONG MAN
By EDWARD INCREASE BOSWORTH

THE MINISTER AS PREACHER
By CHARLES EDWARD JEFFERSON

LETTER FROM PRESIDENT ROOSEVELT
ON THE CALL OF THE NATION FOR ABLE MEN TO LEAD THE FORCES OF CHRISTIANITY

THE MODERN INTERPRETATION OF A CALL TO THE MINISTRY

A "call" to the ministry is usually understood to mean a conviction that God summons a man to the work of the Christian ministry. Can the so-called "modern man" believe that God does ever "call" a man to the ministry or to any other life-work? And if God does, how shall a man recognize the summons? In what form will it come?

Does God call men to their life-work?

The relation of God to the aspirations and choices of all the countless individual souls in His universe is too large a subject for discussion here. Jesus' fundamental teaching regarding the Fatherhood of God may be assumed. According to this teaching, since God is our Father, the lives of His children can not fail to be supremely interesting to Him. Even lesser things, like the fluttering fall of a short-lived bird, interest Him. With how much greater con-

cern will He view the enduring life of His children! He will have preferences regarding their choices. He is near to the spirits of His children, and will have ways of making His preferences known.

"Closer is He than breathing, and nearer than hands and feet." Through the infinite up-push of the Spirit of God in the soul of a man, which we call the sense of duty, God can make known the preferences of His infinite love regarding the choices to be made by His human child. Among the more important of these choices is the choice of a life-work. Therefore, when one has had the courage to venture out unreservedly after Jesus upon the assumption that there is a Fatherly God, there is no difficulty in assuming that He actually summons men to their life-work.

Whatever one's life-work be, he must feel that it has been undertaken because God summons him to it. He decides to be a lawyer because he believes that God has summoned him to the lawyer's career, in order that, as a lawyer, he may be the champion of fair play and so make his best contribution to the on-coming civilization of the brotherly sons of God. Or he becomes a business man, because he believes

that in business life he can best promote the interests of the civilization of friendly workmen, which we call the Kingdom of God. Whatever any man does as his life-work he is to do "in the name of the Lord Jesus," with full measure of Jesus' devotion to the interests of the New Order. In our day the minister may no longer assume for himself some larger share of God's interest than is granted to other men. The young minister simply waited among his fellows, in the great assignment of opportunity, for God to call him to his life-work. God called him to the ministry, and the same God called his friend to the law.

Most of us see the logical necessity of believing that God does direct men in the choice of a life-work. Our difficulty comes in the effort to recognize God's call. How shall an undergraduate find out whether or not God wills that the Christian ministry shall be his life-work?

How shall a man recognize the call of God to the Christian ministry?

If the Almighty God made his preferences absolutely and instantaneously clear, our frail personalities would be so overwhelmed as to have no chance

for the deliberate reflection and initiative that are requisite for character. We are not to be surprised, therefore, by finding that God generally makes the discovery of His will regarding the details of conduct a somewhat slow and character-making process. Our concern is to pass through the process with such industry and conscientiousness in investigation and reflection as surely to be better men at the end of the process than at its beginning.

1. In the process of finding out whether or not God calls a man to the Christian ministry, it is necessary to gain information regarding the opportunities for usefulness afforded by the Christian ministry. One must know what the Christian ministry really is. He must see with some clearness the real contribution made by the Christian minister to the welfare of the community. It is beyond the province of the present discussion to describe this contribution in detail. In brief it is threefold:

The minister is the one to whom all classes and ages in the community may feel that they have a right to come for help in all sorts of emergency. Men in other professions prepare to meet only a certain class of needs, or the needs of a certain class.

But to the minister anyone may come for any kind of help. He is *the* minister. If he can not give the help needed—as in very many cases he can not—he will, in Christ's name, try to find some one who can. He will himself always be ready to give personal help of one vital and fundamentally important kind, help in character-making. He is the specialist in character.

The minister is the one who preaches what we commonly call the Gospel of Jesus Christ to the public on the Sabbath day, and at other times when he finds groups of men ready for his great message. The public church service is to be the centre of inspiration for the life of the community. Men and women who are doing the work of industrial, business, and domestic life, come there weary and heavy laden, but go away spiritually invigorated. All who are engaged in specific forms of philanthropic and religious work, social settlement workers and secretaries of the Young Men's and Young Women's Christian Associations, should be able to find there, in the clear vision of Christ and His Gospel, fresh inspiration for another week's work.

The minister is the leader of the organization

called a church of Jesus Christ. He studies to secure the development of the life of all its members, young and old. He organizes its activities and relates them to the progress of Christianity in the world. He brings it into contact with the life of the community at any point where such contact will help every man to a better chance for all good things. He discerns opportunity in the community for enterprises, vitally religious in their character, and large enough in their dimensions to enlist the enthusiastic personal effort of the gifted laymen of his church, who are accustomed to leadership in the large undertakings of business and professional life in the community. All the educational, social, ethical, and religious interests of the community appeal to him. He not only preaches the Gospel but he is also the leader of his church in the application of the Gospel to the life of the community.

The work of the minister, so conceived, is large in its scope and diversified in its opportunity. The man who is trying to ascertain whether or not he is called to the ministry will surely make a thorough, conscientious study of the contribution to be made to the community by the minister and his church.

In doing this it is sometimes necessary to shake off the memory of some church, whose minister has not been alive to his opportunity, and whose contribution to the welfare of the community is so meager and indistinct as to make his ministry decidedly unattractive to an earnest man; or the memory of some minister "called" to the ministry by no higher authority than the demand of his own selfishness, to whom the ministry is simply a profession which he entered with the hope of making himself a reputation, and to whom the pulpit is simply a place for the display of "platform gifts." These men are the rare exceptions. There are thousands of men who are finding the ministry to be a great opportunity into which they are throwing themselves with unselfish enthusiasm and with increasing satisfaction. Here is the recent clear testimony of one of them, Dr. William Allen Knight: "In numberless American communities are pastors who are successful, trusted, free from undue restraints in thought and utterance, sure of kindness and fair treatment and magnanimity on the part of their parishioners as a whole, and above all happy in the certainty of vital relations with poor and rich, youth and adult, men and women,

church and town. They have adversities to be sure, as most men in responsible positions do, but they face them as all men must who make up

> 'The host that heeds not hurt nor scar
> Led by the bright and morning star.' "

These men are not found exclusively in great city churches, but in village and country churches, which present opportunities as vitally connected with the welfare of the nation as are those of the city pastorate, and fully as interesting when once they are realized.

Some of these successful men should be consulted and pains be taken to get their point of view. Biographies of successful ministers should be read, such as Allen's biography of Phillips Brooks, either the longer or shorter edition, Lyman Abbott's "Henry Ward Beecher," Munger's "Life of Horace Bushnell." There are also good books describing the modern minister's opportunity. Perhaps the most comprehensive and thorough of these is Washington Gladden's recently published book, "The Christian Pastor and the Working Church." Less technical and more inspirational in its type is Lyman Abbott's

"The Christian Ministry." An exceedingly interesting report of personal experience is W. S. Rainsford's "A Preacher's Story of His Work."

In the process of gaining information about the opportunity afforded by the ministry, account must be taken of the demand for ministers. Whether or not one should consider himself called to the ministry depends not simply upon the value of the minister's contribution, but also upon the number who are preparing to make that contribution. An earnest man wishes to find where he is really needed. He wishes to do some valuable service which is not likely to be done unless he does it. He does not wish to bring his re-enforcement to a point on the line which is already amply manned, but to a point where re-enforcement is demanded. It is an open secret that, while some occupations are over-crowded, for some decades the number of strong men entering the ministry has been insufficient. This may result in forcing small neighboring churches of different denominations to combine, and in securing to the minister a clearer field for work and more adequate financial recognition. But when allowance has been made for such desirable results, the fact remains

that the Church is likely to be confronted by a very serious situation twenty, or even ten, years hence.

An insufficient or an inefficient ministry means a weakened Church, and a weakened Church means weakness in all philanthropic organizations, for they draw their strength and inspiration directly or indirectly from the Church. A recognized leader in the Young Men's Christian Association has said that if the Church should lose its vitality the Young Men's Christian Association would become extinct. It is not in place here to discuss in detail the demand for ministers. It is simply proper here to say that the matter must be investigated by the man who is trying to ascertain whether or not he is called to the ministry. He can enter into correspondence with suitable authorities in the body of Christians to which he belongs, and easily ascertain from them what are the exact facts in his own church.

2. When a man has investigated the nature of the contribution made by the minister to the welfare of the community and sees its value, he must try to see whether he can make this contribution, whether he has the qualities requisite for success in the ministry.

Here again the limits of the subject prevent a detailed discussion of what these qualities are. A bare enumeration of them would include the following: convictions born of experience regarding the fundamental truths of the Christian religion; such quick strong sympathy with men as will transform these convictions into message and action, into a passion for character, into a Pauline resolution "by all means to save some"; sufficient skill in public speech to command attention to the message; some administrative ability; readiness to consider suggestions and to profit by friendly and unfriendly criticism; common sense; and a capacity for hard work.

As a man looks for these qualities in himself he must not expect to find them all fully developed. He cannot expect, for instance, to possess positive, well-developed convictions upon all points of theology, for such convictions grow out of a religious experience and it takes time to produce such an experience. Neither can he expect at once to produce two sermons a week. The ability to do this apparently impossible thing will come in time, as it has come to thousands of men no more gifted than he is. He must be content if he sees only the encouraging be-

ginnings of the qualities which make for success when developed.

Furthermore, he must not require in himself qualities requisite for the success of a Beecher or a Spurgeon. We are most of us simply average men, capable of an average man's success in any calling. A man must not turn away from the ministry because he does not find himself possessed of qualities that would yield him the success of a Spurgeon, any more than he would turn away from the law because he could not be a Webster, or from the work of an electrician because he could not be an Edison. The great work of the world in all occupations is done by average men.

In trying to ascertain his fitness for the ministry he will sometimes be helped by the opinions of him formed by those who know him best. In considering the opinions of his friends, however, it is necessary to be sure that they are Christian men who are themselves controlled by the supreme motives of the religious life.

Perhaps the very best way to ascertain his fitness for the work is to try it in some preliminary and temporary form. Most college students have oppor-

tunity to engage in mission work, either in the city mission or in the country schoolhouse, in Christian Endeavor work, in Sunday school teaching, or in the work connected with the Young Men's Christian Association. In some of these ways a man may see whether he has not some of the qualities requisite for success in the ministry. Many college juniors and seniors are sufficiently mature to offer themselves to a home missionary superintendent for a summer of work in the newer states, or in the needy districts of some of the older states. Many who come to the theological seminary today come from a year or more of preaching after graduation from college. There may be some objections to this practice, but the men who come to the seminary from such an experience generally know that they are called to the ministry, and they are eagerly appreciative of all that a modern seminary curriculum offers.

By such practical testing of himself in some preliminary and temporary form of work, a man also puts himself in the way of recognizing God's call, as many men have recognized it, namely, through providential circumstances. Some little church or mission finds in him what it wants, lays divinely guided

hands upon him, and decisively draws him into the ministry.

3. Closely connected with what has been already said about the way to recognize the call of God is listening to the inner voice. Many men in the process of doing what has already been suggested are pretty sure to hear the voice of God calling them into the ministry. When they see the work needing to be done and feel in themselves the ability, with God's help, to do it, the sense of obligation comes, and the question is settled. Some, however, are so constituted as to see clearly the contribution made to the welfare of the community by a half dozen occupations, no one of which perhaps, to their minds, stands out as pre-eminently useful. After they have done the best they can to make a discriminating inventory of their qualifications, they seem to have no special bent, and to be about as well adapted to the demands of one as another of several occupations. To such an one there often comes the slowly forming conviction, which he cannot justify by a clear course of reasoning, that God would have him in the ministry. As he prays to God month after month for guidance, some special feature of the minister's opportunity,

or the community's demand for ministers, takes hold of him and becomes a decisive consideration. What at first was a tentative opinion or a wavering feeling becomes, as he prays, a more and more settled conviction, and when the time comes for action he finds himself ready, and at rest in his purpose to become a Christian minister. Perhaps he enters a theological seminary before he has fully reached this point, because it seems simply probable that God would have him in the ministry. After a year in the seminary and especially after a summer in home mission work, he is reasonably sure of himself and ready to go on. Some whose success in the ministry has given most satisfactory evidence that God really did call them to it, have entered it in response to a slowly developing sense of call like that just described.

In all the process by which a man tries to recognize the call of God, the main thing is the honest heart. As he lays the matter before God in prayer month after month, he must repeatedly say with sincerity: "Whatever be my life-work, I will enter upon it because I believe it to be the one in which I can make my largest contribution to human wel-

fare as Jesus conceived it. I may not have much ability, but what I have I will apply where it will count most for human welfare as Jesus conceived it." He will not enter the ministry for the sake of the opportunity afforded by it to gratify intellectual tastes and to secure quick social recognition. Neither will he turn away from it because it affords no opportunity for making money and getting the things that money can buy. The ministry has its hardships of course. A great opportunity anywhere almost always involves correspondingly great difficulties, and calls for correspondingly strenuous endeavor, and glad sacrifice of lesser interests. But it brings with it correspondingly ample rewards. To the man who hears his Lord's call to the Christian ministry and heartily obeys it, there come the unique and unexpected satisfactions that belong to those only who do their Lord's will at a cost. In very few occupations can men win the tribute paid by John Watson to the pastor of his youth: "People turned to him as by instinct in their joys and sorrows; men consulted him in the crises of life, and, as they lay a-dying, committed their wives and children to his care. He was a head to every widow, and a father to the orphans,

and the friend of all lowly, discouraged, unsuccessful souls. Ten miles away people did not know his name, but his own congregation regarded no other, and in the Lord's presence it was well known, it was often mentioned; when he laid down his trust, and arrived on the other side, many whom he had fed and guided, and restored and comforted till he saw them through the gates, were waiting to receive their shepherd-minister, and as they stood round him before the Lord, he, of all men, could say without shame, 'Behold, Lord, thine under-shepherd, and the flock thou didst give me.'"[1]

Such a minister hears the call of God sounding with increasing distinctness in his soul through all the years of his responding ministry, until summons merges into plaudit, and he enters fully into that joy of his Lord which, in lesser measure, has long been the habit of his soul. If one can justly convince himself that the Almighty God is actually calling him to the Christian ministry, he has reason to rise and, with the vision of the ministering Son of Man before him, bless God.

[1] "The Cure of Souls," p. 242.

THE PREPARATION OF THE MODERN MINISTER

BY

WALTER WILLIAM MOORE

PRESIDENT OF UNION THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY,
RICHMOND, VIRGINIA

NEW YORK

STUDENT YOUNG MEN'S CHRISTIAN ASSOCIATION

124 EAST TWENTY-EIGHTH STREET

1909

3589

Copyright, 1909, by
The International Committee of Young Men's
Christian Associations

LIBRARY
SOUTHERN BAPTIST COLLEGE
WALNUT RIDGE, ARK.

The Claims and Opportunities of the Christian Ministry

A SERIES OF PAMPHLETS
EDITED BY JOHN R. MOTT

THE PREPARATION OF THE MODERN MINISTER

By WALTER WILLIAM MOORE

SERIES OF PAMPHLETS ON THE

CLAIMS AND OPPORTUNITIES OF THE CHRISTIAN MINISTRY

THE CLAIMS OF THE MINISTRY ON STRONG MEN
By GEORGE ANGIER GORDON

THE RIGHT SORT OF MEN FOR THE MINISTRY
By WILLIAM FRASER MCDOWELL

THE MODERN INTERPRETATION OF THE CALL TO THE MINISTRY
By EDWARD INCREASE BOSWORTH

THE PREPARATION OF THE MODERN MINISTER
By WALTER WILLIAM MOORE

THE MINISTER AND HIS PEOPLE
By PHILLIPS BROOKS

THE MINISTER AND THE COMMUNITY
By WOODROW WILSON

THE CALL OF THE COUNTRY CHURCH
By ARTHUR STEPHEN HOYT

THE WEAK CHURCH AND THE STRONG MAN
By EDWARD INCREASE BOSWORTH

THE MINISTER AS PREACHER
By CHARLES EDWARD JEFFERSON

LETTER FROM PRESIDENT ROOSEVELT
ON THE CALL OF THE NATION FOR ABLE MEN TO LEAD THE FORCES OF CHRISTIANITY

THE PREPARATION OF THE MODERN MINISTER

The end should determine the means. The preparation a man receives should be determined by the work he is to do. The answer to the question, What kind of training should a minister have? is found in the answer to the question, What is to be the minister's work? When we know what he is to do we shall know how to train him to do it.

What, then, is the true ideal of a minister's work? We may answer in brief that he is to be the chief exemplar, teacher, and functionary of the Christian religion to the people of his charge. This involves five essential things, and these five things have determined the general organization and course of study which have been adopted by practically all branches of the Church in their training schools for ministers, and which, as thus approved by the wisdom and experience of the past and agreed upon by virtually the whole Church, should still constitute

the basis and body of every thoroughgoing course of ministerial training, whatever modifications of detail may be made to meet the demands of any particular time or community, and however opinions may vary as to the relative stress to be laid upon each of these five disciplines, fundamental in the preparation of the minister.

In the first place, in order that the minister may be a true exponent of the Christian religion, he must himself have had experience of its power. Before a man can shine he must burn. "The outer must be preceded by the inner; public life for God must be preceded by private life with God; unless God has first spoken to a man, it is vain for a man to attempt to speak for God. . . . The prime qualification of a minister is that he be himself a religious man—that before he begins to make God known, he should first himself know God."[1] His experience of God will be the measure of his power with men. If he does not speak with enthusiasm—and let us remember in passing that the word means, etymologically, "having God within"—if he does not speak with enthusiasm he does not speak with effect.

[1] James Stalker, "The Preacher and His Models," p. 9.

The Old Testament prophet was the prototype of the New Testament preacher. There are three words in the Hebrew which are translated "prophet." Two of these words mean to see, and the third means to speak, and to speak out of the overflowing fullness of the heart. Here then are the essential ideas, spiritual insight and spontaneous, irrepressible, magnetic speech. "These prophets are not mere messengers. They are not like a telegraph boy who takes a sealed letter from the office and carries it to some one and does not know what it contains. They are not like phonographs to whom the message is communicated and by whom the message is repeated. Their messages are not dictated to them; they are not merely amanuenses who write down what is dictated. The message enters into them, transforms their nature, makes them what they are. So they are holy men, spiritual men, godly men, with the message wrought into their own consciousness and coming forth from their own consciousness. It becomes part of their nature. The word is in their hearts as a burning fire shut up in their bones. They cannot keep it to themselves; it must find expression." [1]

[1] Lyman Abbott, "The Christian Ministry," pp. 240–241.

Since "Christian theology is the science of the Christian religion, as revealed in the Bible, developed in history, and believed and practiced in the Church," and since the minister is the official exponent of this religion, he must of course master this science in its four recognized divisions, to be presently named; but more fundamental and decisive than all other branches of theology in the preparation of the minister is what we may call *experimental theology*—that personal experience of God by which he receives into himself the divine message and makes it a part of his life. Only as the truth has been vitalized in a man's own heart will it come with living power to other hearts. *Pectus est quod theologum facit.*

In the second place, in order that he may be an authoritative exponent of the Christian religion, the minister must know how Christianity came to be; that is, he must have a first-hand acquaintance with the record of the revelations of God through Israel and Christ and the Apostles. Therefore he should know both his Old Testament and his New,[1] not only as to their general factual and doctrinal contents as ex-

[1] *Vetus Testamentum in Novo patet, Novum Testamentum in Vetere latet*, Augustine.

hibited in the English Version—such a knowledge is now common in the theological lay public of Protestant countries, and he is to be the leader and teacher of that public—but he should know them also in the form in which they were originally given, and should be able to expound them to his people with the confidence of assured knowledge of the sources. This is *exegetical theology*, and since the Bible is the instrument which God uses for bringing men to the knowledge of Himself as He is revealed in Jesus Christ, this thorough study of the Bible which prepares a man to interpret it to his fellow-men should always occupy a very large place in the training of the minister for the duties of his office.

"To-day there are widespread discussions as to whether Hebrew should be studied in theological seminaries as a compulsory subject; and when one or two seminaries had made it elective, others were compelled to 'go them one better' by making Greek also elective. There is nothing to be said about this, except that where it takes able men and puts them out into the ministry without these, the theological seminary is unspeakably cruel, and the man who consents to this impoverishing of his equipment

is short-sighted in the extreme. The man who will take time for a full preparation and who has the courage for hard work, and who has before him that one true and lofty ideal for his forty years of pastoral labor, would always passionately resent the treatment which induced him to forego his full equipment in the knowledge of the Scriptures. It is not meant that he is to become an expert in higher criticism. But it is meant that he must be able intelligently, broad-mindedly to judge of the theories which on all hands are being thrown up by the experts, so that, as one of the greatest among living scholars has said, he may possess 'an intelligent acquaintance as to what is certain, probable, and doubtful in the sphere of Biblical criticism.'" [1]

In a suggestive article on "The Homiletical Worth of the Study of Hebrew" [2] Professor W. N. Donovan shows that the Hebrew language is of profit to the preacher in its influence on his own personality, broadening his intellectual horizon by acquainting him with the thought method of the Semites, accus-

[1] W. Douglas Mackenzie, "Practical Training for the Ministry," *The Homiletic Review*, December, 1907, p. 417.

[2] *The Biblical World*, July, 1908, p. 51.

toming his mind to new views and distinctions, and deepening his sympathy as the emotional traits of another race are explored; in its effect on both the content and delivery of his message, furnishing as it does an abundance of warm, living imagery setting forth things fundamental in life, stimulating his appreciation of moral values, breaking through his Anglo-Saxon habits of thought and expression, "puncturing with vital suggestion the hardened familiarity of our thought and feeling," and rendering the heart and mind more responsive to the appeals of the spiritual life; and in the inspirational power which it has from its intimate association with the most spiritual messages given to the race. No one should underestimate any factor that brings out more clearly the exact flavor of the message, or brings one closer to the Spirit-filled men. Such a factor must be the language through which these messages came to the world. "Give a bright man only a year's seminary course in Hebrew, and he will be going back of our best translations with satisfaction to his intellect and profit to his soul."

But, while the language offers these great advantages to the man who has the ability, energy and time

to acquire it, they do not justify the claim that every minister must study Hebrew. The writer is stating normal advantages for the normal man. "Exceptional men should have exceptional training adapted to their exceptional gifts. . . . So far as this paper succeeds in gaining its purpose, it has in view the great mass of students for the ministry, not the men phenomenally unable to acquire a language, nor, at the other extreme, the brilliant linguist whose especial endowments enable him to gain especial profit from any language-study, but the mass of reasonably equipped, earnest, practical men. To such the study of Hebrew offers assured advantages, homiletically, and in practical personal development."

The practical value of a knowledge of Greek is still more indisputable—so clear indeed that, though there are some who question even this, it is still generally admitted.

In addition to the thorough and detailed study of selected Scriptures in the original languages—and surely the regular course in seminaries should include at least the masterpieces of the Old Testament and the New in the form in which they were first given—the prospective minister must become famil-

iar with the Word in its English dress. He must have a ready command of the general contents of the Bible and each of its books. The microscopic method must be supplemented by the telescopic. The study of the English Version should be given a large place in each of the three seminary years—sufficiently large to give the student a clear conspectus and a firm grasp of each of the books and of the Bible as a whole.

In the third place, in order that he may be an authority on the Christian religion, the minister must know what Christianity has done in the world and how it has done it. This branch of his preparation is called *historical theology*, or Church history, since it traces the growth of Christianity with all its instructive experiences and developments from the founding of the Church to the present time, giving the minister the benefit of the accumulated wisdom and experience of the past, teaching him how to avoid the errors and mistakes of his predecessors, preventing him from "mistaking old errors in a new dress for new discoveries," vivifying his knowledge of the content of Scripture teaching, and showing "God in the march of his providence illustrating his word."

In the fourth place, in order that he may be a true exponent of Christianity, the minister must know the general system of Christian truth as a whole, the unity, harmony, and completeness of the revealed religion as an organism; he must have a comprehensive, scientific, orderly view of "the doctrines and duties of Christianity as now held and understood on the basis of the Scriptures and the history of the church"; he must be as much at home in the New Testament epistles as in the narrative parts of Scripture, but thinking intensely through their intense thinking, thus making his sermons not merely interesting but impressive with the weight and grandeur of New Testament thought; he must acquire such a grasp of the entire content of Scriptural teaching as will enable him in the light of the whole to interpret aright any particular part, to avoid scrappiness and incoherence in his presentation of it, and to give to the mind of the hearer the satisfying feeling that every partial truth has the pressure of the whole truth behind it.[1] This department therefore, *systematic theology*, has, like the others, great practical value. It is vitally related to the minister's efficiency.

[1] "The Clerical Life," p. 58.

"Great preaching only breaks out of the deep rich soil of a great theology. The age of great preachers has always been the age of great religious beliefs. Preaching, to be robust, trenchant, down-reaching, soul-searching, will-compelling, life-moulding, must be theological, dogmatic, authoritative. The great preaching has always and only been done by the theological athletes, by men who believed something, by men who were saturated and steeped with the spiritual certitudes, by men who could think God's thoughts after Him and thread their way through that ordered plan by which God saves the world to the glory of His grace. We notice, if we have read any history, that the notable spiritual world-movements and upheavals have all been inspired by great convictions of truth. From the Apostolic age to the Augustinian, from the Reformation to the Puritan, they have been theological ages. The great epochs have been theological; the great revivals have been doctrinal; the notable revolutions have been driven under the lash of great moral and doctrinal convictions.

It is a fatal mistake to suppose that a minister or church can get on without a theology. An individual

it has been said, may get on with religion, but 'a church must have its dogma.' Its vitality will ebb if you devitalize its creed, or cut it down to the vanishing point. The world with its great heart-hunger, with its corroding misery, is not going to make large place for the clerical invertebrate who goes to his work mumbling his half-beliefs and disseminating his unreasoned opinions, throwing out his theological conjectures like half-spans that rest on no solid piers in midstream and reach no further shores of assured certitude. . . . It is not from too much theology the Church suffers but from far too little. It is not from too much dogmatism and authority the pulpit is weak, but from the lack of the positive note and the authoritative accent born of great convictions of the larger truth.[1]

So Dr. W. A. Bartlett, pastor of the First Congregational Church of Chicago, speaking of decadent churches, finds the explanation of them in the insufficient training of the theological seminaries. "They are teaching more things than ever, but not always the one thing needful. The young man who goes into

[1] Samuel H. Howe, "The Place of Theology in Preaching," *Bible Student and Teacher*, October, 1906, pp. 244-5, 247.

a community as minister has often very vague ideas concerning the great doctrines of the Bible. He has a kind of pottering knowledge of many things which makes him believe that the regeneration of the neighborhood is to be brought about through a gentle, ethical, social settlement régime. He dabbles in politics, economics, clubs, and various worthy institutions, which were never intended to take the place of the Church, and becomes a kind of errand boy for everything from the bricklayers' union to a woman's guild, to provide soft food for people without teeth. The Church has one great mission, and when it faithfully fulfils that mission it will never lack in interest and power. The mission of the Church is to preach to mankind the whole counsel of God."

Let it be noted that neither Dr. Howe nor Dr. Bartlett is a theological professor. They are both active pastors, and they urge the study of systematic theology in the interest, not of mere scholarship, but of practical efficiency in the ministry.

In like manner Professor Peabody of Harvard holds that the neglect of theology is a grave mistake which threatens the usefulness of the ministry, and he laments that feeling and action are crowding out

of the foreground of interest the function of thought, that the passion for service is supplanting the passion for truth. "Not less of religious fervor and not less of practical activity are demanded of the representatives of religion, but a new accession of intellectual power, the capacity to translate the message of the Timeless into the dialect of the present age. The specialization of knowledge has prescribed to the minister of religion a definite sphere, and no amount of hastily acquired information about politics or economics or social reform can atone for the abandonment of his own province. On other subjects others are better trained than he, and may listen to his counsel with compassion, if not with contempt. If he gives up thinking about religion, he gives up his place in a learned profession. He may continue to be a devoted priest, an efficient administrator, a devout soul, but the direction of the mind of the age is transferred to other hands." [1]

In the fifth place, in order that he may be an effective exponent of Christianity, the minister must know how to utilize the results of his exegetical, historical, and systematic study of revealed truth for the

[1] *The Harvard Theological Review*, January, 1908.

accomplishment of the two great ends for which the Church exists, self-propagation and self-edification, evangelistic work and pastoral work, ingathering and upbuilding. This consummation of sacred learning to which all other departments look and by which they become useful for the establishment and extension of the Kingdom of God in the world is *practical theology*—"the science and art of the various functions of the Christian ministry for the preservation and propagation of the Christian religion at home and abroad."[1]

The preparation of the modern minister will include special training in each of five divisions: First, experimental theology, which has to do with the man's own experience of the religion which he preaches; second, exegetical theology, which has to do with the record of those revelations which constitute the Christian rule of faith and practice; third, historical theology, which has to do with the past history and growth of Christianity; fourth, systematic theology, which has to do with its present status; and fifth, practical theology, which has to do with its future pros-

[1] Philip Schaff, "Theological Propædeutic," p. 448.

pects. These five things still constitute the backbone of theological training. They are indispensable to a full ministerial equipment. Each of them has a distinctly practical end. They are studied not merely for knowledge but for use, not for the gratification of intellectual curiosity but for the promotion of practical efficiency. The supreme aim is not to make accomplished scholars and specialists in the various departments of theological science, but to make good ministers of the Lord Jesus Christ, who will serve Him and His Church with increasing efficiency year after year.

Some of those who advocate the abandonment of this broad, generous, and thorough discipline, and the substitution for it of biology, hypnotism, mental and physical hygiene, and a psychology and pedagogy, which deny the possibility of any such break as is implied in conversion and the new birth, do unquestionably minimize or eliminate the supernatural element in religion, throw overboard the Biblical doctrines of grace, and "leave Christianity merely a system of morals and the best only of natural religions." But not all of those who advocate the addition of other studies to the seminary curriculum and who

demand a change of the relative emphasis put upon the different parts of the course are of this radical and destructive type. The very statement of the subject assigned me, "The Preparation of the Modern Minister," implies that some such change is needed, and this assumption is correct.

Most of the changes called for lie in the last of the five great departments outlined above, practical theology, the science and art of the functions of the minister, the study of the methods by which he brings the saving truth to bear upon the individual and the community of his own time. The modern minister has a fourfold function: as pastor, as leader of public worship, as administrator, and as preacher. It seems to be generally conceded that most of our seminaries give their students adequate preparation for their work as pastors and as leaders of worship. They are taught the best methods of pastoral visitation, as the friends and counsellors of their people, and the best methods of personal work with the inquirer, the doubter, and other classes of individuals needing special guidance and help; and they are carefully instructed in the orderly and edifying conduct of public worship and in the high function of interpreting

the people to God. But it is claimed that they are not always adequately prepared for their work as administrators and preachers.

As the minister is to be the executive head of his church, and as the modern church, especially in the cities, is in many cases an elaborate and complicated organization, he should, before undertaking to lead and use it as a force in the community, have some instruction in business methods, in church finance, in the keeping of church records, in the organizing of the membership and the developing of its activities, in his relation to the other officers of the church and its various organizations, men's societies, women's societies, young people's societies, and especially to the Sunday school. The seminaries, almost without exception, are now providing instruction in the history of religious education, the principles and methods of teaching, the organization and administration of the Sunday school and the training of its teachers.

The main function of the minister is the preaching of the Gospel. Therefore the curriculum of the seminary should be planned with the controlling view of fitting men to preach. And let it be remem-

bered that the preacher is a man who has something to say and the power to say it. His preparation should cover both points. However genuine and deep his personal experience of divine grace and however rich and full his knowledge of the divine word, unless he has aptness to teach and power of public utterance he cannot preach. His mastery of the art of discourse is one of the vital things in his fitting for his supreme function.

There are certain special subjects, besides those already mentioned, which need to be taken account of in a practical way in the preparation of the present-day minister. One of these is apologetics. Our age is not only one of uncertainty and unrest on the part of many within the Church in regard to religious subjects, intelligent, thoughtful, and earnest people who need competent guidance that they may be reassured and confirmed in regard to vital points of faith, but it is also an age of subtly reasoned scepticism and bold attacks upon the central positions of Christianity which must be understood and met with scholarly thoroughness and Christian fairness. "Large service can be rendered by all who help to restate the old facts and unchanged

truths in terms that will make them vivid and vital to others." [1]

Another of these special subjects which should have attention in the department of practical theology is comparative religion. Modern exploration, modern commerce, and modern missions have put Christianity into closer contact with all the religions of the world than it ever was before and have imposed upon the Christian minister a stronger obligation to study the relationship, the virtues, and the defects of the various religions of mankind, and to vindicate by comparison and contrast the divine origin and character of Christianity and make good its claim to be the ultimate religion. That this is necessary for the Student Volunteer, who expects to do his work in a foreign land, is at once evident to all. But it is necessary also for the minister in the home-land, confronted as he is by a swarm of "fad religions," which number their votaries by thousands.

The necessity for careful attention to the principles and methods of evangelistic work at home and mis-

[1] J. R. Mott, "The Future Leadership of the Church," p. 20.

sionary work abroad is so generally recognized that simple mention of them here will be sufficient.

How does the minister stand related to modern sociology? Nothing is more characteristic of much of the Christianity of our time than the deepening of its conviction that Christ came to establish the Kingdom of God on earth, here and now, as distinguished from the introduction of a new order of things at the millenium or some other remote period in the future, and the consequent increase of its emphasis on social reform, the reconstruction of society, the regeneration of man's moral, intellectual and bodily life, as well as his religious or spiritual life, the elimination of poverty, degradation and misery, the promotion of social equity, economic justice, civic righteousness, clean politics, public health, and the like. What should be the minister's relation to these movements for the betterment of the social order?

The importance of determining carefully the principle on which work for social reform should be undertaken by the minister and the far-reaching and tremendous consequences of a mistake at this point are impressively set forth in a thoughtful article on "The Gospel and Social Reform," by Dr. D. W.

Simon, in *The Homiletic Review* for October, 1908.

It has been said that socialism and Christianity are alike in that both of them seek a new social order. "They are unlike in the method by which they propose to secure the new social order. Socialism attributes what is evil in men to the evil system, and proposes to change the system that it may change the spirit. Christianity attributes what is evil in the system to the evil spirit in men, and proposes to change the spirit that it may change the system." [1] For instance, socialism proposes to change our industrial system, with its principle of competition, and make the community one great corporation, whereas Christianity proposes to change the spirit and the motives of the men who are carrying it on, substituting the principle of love for the spirit of selfishness. So the minister is not to deal with the scientific details of political or industrial organization and the technical problems connected with capital and labor but to instruct the people in the moral principles of a true social order. His function is not executive but inspirational. The economist, the journalist, the

[1] Lyman Abbott, "The Christian Ministry," p. 143.

statesman must work out the machinery which shall make effective the movements for social betterment. "But the minister has an infinitely higher function. He has his hand upon the springs of all action. He deals with principles, not policies; with motives, not methods. He is to inspire with true idealism the hearts and consciences of his fellows. In our prosperous and materialistic age and land, the supreme need is for vision, and the highest office is that of seer. That is the precise social function of the modern minister. And there is no one else who can take his place; no one else who stands for the ideal, pure and simple." [1] "If ministers will leave the professional teachers to expound the secular, that is, the empirical side of social science, the newspapers to reflect such conclusions as are reached respecting social science, and the politicians to embody those opinions and principles in law, and will devote themselves to the spiritual study of the Book and of life, they can be leaders of the leaders. They can lay the foundations on which other men shall rear the superstructure." [2]

[1] C. D. Williams, "The Claims of the Ministry upon Educated Young Men," *The Intercollegian*, November, 1905, p. 26.

[2] Lyman Abbott, "The Christian Ministry," p. 163.

The preparation of the minister from first to last should be kept as close to life as possible and should aim constantly to give him all needed power to deal effectively with present-day men and women and children. As Schauffler suggests: "He must be better acquainted with the Church sons than with the Church Fathers, more familiar with Jim and Sam than with Origen and Chrysostom. His speech must be the speech of the street, the home and the heart." The great subjects above mentioned should all be taught with a constant view to their bearing upon the actual needs of the men and women now in the world.

Our conclusion is that while the time-tested discipline of the seminaries is better adapted as a whole to the preparation of the modern minister for his work than any other which has yet been proposed and that while its essential features should therefore be retained, it is nevertheless capable of improvement by some changes of proportion and emphasis, bringing into greater prominence the English Bible, administrative and teaching work, comparative religion, missions, and above all the studies that make directly for the promotion of pulpit power.

A LETTER FROM

PRESIDENT ROOSEVELT

REGARDING THE NEED FOR MORE MEN OF ABILITY TO LEAD THE AGGRESSIVE FORCES OF CHRISTIANITY

Prefatory Note

When the need, based on actual facts, of more men—the ablest and most vigorous type of men—for Christian leadership, was brought to the attention of President Roosevelt, and his aid was asked in bringing that need before the young men in our universities and colleges, he was greatly impressed and without hesitation consented to help. He wrote the following letter, which makes its own irresistible appeal for service in Church and nation.

John R. Mott.

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

October 12, 1908.

My dear Mr. Mott:

I very earnestly sympathize with the plea you make, in "The Future Leadership of the Church," for the strongest and best trained young men to turn themselves more and more toward the leadership of the aggressive forces that make for Christianity. It is a matter of grave concern that in the United States, especially, there should be a tendency in the number of students at the leading graduate theological schools to fall off at the very time that the communicant membership of the churches is markedly increasing. Indeed this question of recruiting the ranks of the Christian ministry is one of world-wide interest and concern. But I do not speak only of ministers. I speak of all who take part in a broad and catholic spirit in work for the essentials of Christianity, of all who without regard to differences of sect will join with one another, and indeed with all good men in whatever way they worship their Creator, to bring nearer the reign of righteousness and of brotherly kindness on this earth.

Small, narrow, onesided men, no matter how earnest, cannot supply leadership for the moral and religious forces

ness in country life; and to do this will help put a stop to the unhealthy drift toward the cities. We have a vast missionary responsibility, not only in the Philippines, but in Asia and Africa as well. Moreover, all clergymen, all laymen who thoroly believe that the tree is to be judged by its fruits, that religion and Christianity cannot prosper unless they result in moral uplift and social betterment, are in honor bound to try to furnish leadership in every social movement for the self-mastery of the individual, for the uplifting of mankind. This means that ever before us there will be the problem of working, with fervor but with broad tolerance and charity, so that religion may find its expression in an upright and useful life. There must be union and cooperation among all good men who wish to see the spirit of true Christianity given practical expression in accordance with the biblical precept that "by their fruits shall you know them." There are opportunities of note in the world for all such men, be they clergymen or laymen. Grave responsibilities rest upon them. Danger and work challenge them to action. Let the challenge be accepted. The work to be done is not easy. No work worth doing ever is easy. The fight for righteousness, the effort to realize the kingdom of God in this world, is fraught with infinite hardship and risk, with the certainty of wearisome labor and discouragement, with danger to all who are feeble and faint-hearted. It is because of this very fact

that the best, the most resolute, and the most daring spirits. should listen to the summons which calls them to the life of effort and conflict. We ask that men of heroic temper undertake the great adventure. We ask it for the very reason that the work thus undertaken necessitates the sacrifice of self-interest. Heroic deeds are to be done in this struggle and we ask for heroic men to come forward and do them. The trumpet call is the most inspiriting of all sounds, because it summons men to spurn ease and self-indulgence and timidity, and bids them forth to the field where they must dare and do and die at need. So now the call of duty to undertake this great spiritual adventure, this work for the betterment of mankind, should ring in the ears of young men who are high of heart and gallant of soul, as a challenge to turn to the hard life of labor and risk which is so infinitely well worth living.

Sincerely yours,

Theodore Roosevelt

Mr. John R. Mott,
124 East 28th Street,
New York, N. Y.

What Is Christ's Ideal for His Church for Our Day?

By

FRANCIS P. MILLER

and

GEORGE STEWART

Published for
THE STUDENT DEPARTMENT
of The National Council of
Young Men's Christian Associations

Distributed by
ASSOCIATION PRESS
NEW YORK: 347 Madison Ave.
1926

Copyright 1926
The General Board of
The Young Men's Christian Associations

Printed in the United States of America

Foreword

At its meeting at Lake Forest in September, 1925, the National Theological Sub-Committee of the Student Department decided that the purpose of its work should be "to challenge seminary students to discover the true conception of the Church of Christ for our day and to give themselves utterly to make their present churches into the nature of the true ideal." In the light of this purpose the Committee asked its chairman, Dr. George Stewart, and its secretary, Francis P. Miller, to prepare a series of questions which might be used by theological students in discussion groups or in interseminary conferences and retreats. This brief syllabus is the result.

Contents

		Page
I.	Who Is Christ?	7
II.	What Are Our Principal Philosophical Perplexities?	9
III.	What Are Our Principal Social Perplexities?	11
IV.	What Are Our Principal Spiritual Perplexities?	13
V.	What Ought the Church to Be in View of Our Perplexities and Needs?	15
	Bibiliography	18

General Theme

What Is Christ's Ideal for His Church for Our Day?

Christ's Ideal Church would seek to answer life's major questions and meet life's major needs in the life and thought of modern men and women.

I.

Who Is Christ?

Jesus occupies the central position in Christian life and thought. It makes an enormous practical difference what value is placed upon him. Ripe scholars and devout believers of every group differ in the conception of many aspects of Jesus' life but none differ in acknowledging him as the paramount leader of thought and life. No philosopher today with any considerable following, either within Christendom or without, disputes the ethical supremacy of the spiritual and intellectual teaching which Jesus sets forth in his recorded utterances and in his ministry of compassion.

The main facts of Jesus' life, death, and resurrection are as well attested as are the major events in the life of Julius Caesar. He was and is an objective fact. As the central figure in the faith of millions, and as an ethical teacher almost universally acknowledged as supreme, it is important for us to ask such questions as these concerning him.

1. What is the Unitarian position regarding Jesus?
2. What is the Jewish position?
3. Does Jesus differ in kind or degree from us?
4. Is there any logical or spiritual necessity for basing one's faith in the divinity of Jesus on the manner of his birth?
5. How does it affect one's position regarding the deity or the divinity of our Lord to reason from the quality of his moral excellence rather than to base his divinity simply upon the nature of his birth?
6. What Gospels record the story of the miraculous birth of our Lord? Which ones omit the record?
7. Does Paul mention it?
8. Make a list of the differences in the portrait of Jesus as depicted by the respective authors of the Gospels.
9. What is your conception of the "Living Christ" today? Is he abiding in the hearts and minds of men? Does he possess objective reality regardless of whether or not he is received by man?

10. Is the "Living Christ" qualitatively the same as the Jesus of history who walked and talked in Palestine?

11. Was the Cross a necessary experience for Jesus?

12. What did the Cross mean to him?

13. What did the Cross mean to God?

14. Are we speaking correctly when we term hard luck, or accident, or consequence of one's own misdeeds, or biological or social punishment a cross?

15. To what extent is the experience of the Cross, either for ourselves or in a supreme way for Jesus, differentiated from the totality of suffering by such characteristics as:

a. That it is voluntary?

b. That it is for others?

16. Which of the following would you include as elements in your description of the Cross?

a. Is it a supreme educational act, a dramatization of an eternal process whereby redemptive love attracts, arrests, and convinces mankind?

b. Is its power chiefly in its moral influence?

c. Does it appease an angry God who needed innocent suffering to assuage his wrath?

d. How satisfactory is Paul's description: "God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself" (II Cor. 5:19)?

17. Is the chief event of Jesus' ministry Good Friday or Easter Day? Does his way always end in a cross, or should we look through the Cross to ultimate victory?

18. Can Christ rightfully claim the allegiance of every man?

19. Can he claim to be the Lord of Life and of Thought?

II.

Philosophical Perplexities?

No serious person will deny that men are burdened with perplexities above and beyond those which afflicted our fathers. Machinery has speeded up life and made it complex; astronomy has enlarged our universe beyond the wildest flights of imagination, while microscopic research and speculation have revealed forms of life and energy unbelievably minute, both causing vast changes in our idea of God. Biblical criticism has caused men to shift their faith from literal descriptions to underlying experiences; psychology has in some realms clarified and in others confused men's thinking. Theology and other realms of philosophy have few of the old landmarks left; even the stable law of gravitation is proved by Einstein to be only a relative force. Are we not as a generation in the predicament which John Muir described when he wrote home from the Yosemite: "I am tired but happy, with a life-full of glorious problems"?

Questions

1. Is the universe friendly?
2. Is God in control?
3. Is the ultimate cause behind theistic evolution the Christian God?
4. To what shall be one's prior allegiance—to one's class, nation, or God?
5. If to God alone, will not any modern state break down under individualism?
6. Cardinal Manning once said to Hilaire Belloc: "All human perplexities are ultimately theological." How far is this true?
7. Does it make any practical difference whether you believe:
   a. That God is one—*monism?*
   b. That God is many—*pluralism?*
   c. That God is in all and through all—*pantheism?*

8. Does the solution of the following problems go back to the fundamental problem of the nature of God:

a. Whether there is an answer to prayer?

b. Whether there is such a thing as spiritual guidance?

c. Whether social evils can be stamped out; whether human nature can change or be changed?

d. Whether bitter and sour dispositions and stained lives can be sweetened and given newness of life?

e. Whether an adequate international organization can be worked out so that all peoples may realize their potential capacities?

III.

Social Perplexities

Institutions and customs regarded by our fathers as permanent manifestations of their social philosophy and faith are proving less suitable to the needs of our time. The verdict on democracy itself is more frequently "not proven." In the industrial system strain increases between employer and employee. Racial groups all over the world are more self-conscious and more sensitive to discrimination. In such a changing world what is the mission of the Church? The only church worthy of the name of Jesus Christ is one where men discover a fellowship in which institutions and forms are ever subject to readjustment, and verbal expressions of faith are ever subject to restatement in order that these may continue in the midst of a changing world to be an expression of the truth which they embody. The eternal values abide, the form of description changes.

Questions

1. Is government under the name of democracy becoming an instrument by which the few who control industry secure their own position? How far has the Church become identified with the few who control?
2. Is democracy now synonymous with "public good," "racial equality," "freedom of speech," "equality before the law"?
3. Does belief in democracy involve the abdication of private judgment and participation in a communal "goose step"? How far are the opinions expressed in the sermons you hear a reflection of this "goose step"?
4. Is it possible for an informed public opinion to register in Washington with sufficient force to secure action? What is a minister's duty, if any, here?
5. Why are the mass of industrial workers outside the Church?
6. Suppose a Negro were to come into your Church?
7. Why is religion so often a bulwark of "things as they were"?

8. Is God interested in maintaining the "rights of any group"?

9. Do you know of any theological seminary whose teaching is determined by the theological preferences of the industrial magnates who are members of the congregations of the ministers who sit on the seminary's board?

10. Do you know of any parish church which is serving as an experiment center in:

a. The removal of race conflict?

b. The development of fellowship between workers by hand and workers by brain?

11. Is there a fair distribution of wealth?

12. If wealth were redistributed fairly now, would that right our major economic wrongs?

13. To what extent are *all men free?*

14. To what extent are all men equal?

15. Is it any more ethical for a state or a majority to control and fix prices and usages than for an individual to do so?

IV.

Spiritual Perplexities

For more thoughtful folk the great perplexity of our day is in the realm of the spirit. It is incredible, of course, that there should be any ultimate conflict between science and religion in a world where both are but different approaches to the same reality. But there is vast perplexity among those whose thought forms and verbiage have been acquired from modern science. The Church has a tremendous responsibility to discover and sympathetically interpret a statement of faith comprehensible to these. But of equal importance and far more difficult is the Church's responsibility for that vast majority who have no perplexities because they have no thought. There is truth in the charge that in the United States we have built a society on comfort and wish to call it a civilization. Prayer or worship can have no meaning apart from magic to the fat, profit-seeking soul. A genuine Christian Church can survive only as it discovers how it can inoculate men whose souls are rotting from contentment over sordid commercial success with such a divine discontent that they are constantly being driven out into a perpetually fresh quest for God.

Questions

1. Some questions that deserve a minister's best and most continuous thought:
   a. What do I mean by a personal God?
   b. What are the implications of "relativity" for faith?
   c. What is the relation of the individual to his fellows? Are we isolated or are we members of the Body of Christ?
   d. What is *matter?* What is *spirit?*
2. How far has religion come to be a mere matter of "eminent respectability"?
3. How far is the conflict of conservative *vs.* radical, the *real* religious issue of our time?
4. Why does the faith of American Christians seem to make relatively so little difference in life?

5. What kind of faith is a re-creative force? Under what conditions is it operative?

6. Why is there no more spiritual perplexity? How far is the religion you know an opiate?

7. What do you think of the statement that "nothing that is expressed in words can be true"?

8. Why is God regarded as so inconsequential in their lives by the generality of folk?

9. How far has *success* in life come to be a criterion of the quality of faith in the congregations you know?

10. What are the conditions of a man growing his own soul—not borrowing someone else's?

11. Do you know of churches where:

a. The minister is helping to meet perplexities and needs of individuals?

b. The worship service adequately symbolizes the spirit of reverence and awe in the presence of God?

c. Sermons represent the minister's effort to share with the congregation in a fresh revelation of truth rather than in repetition of old shibboleths?

12. Does prayer make any difference apart from the one who prays?

13. Are conversions a thing of the past?

14. Should all men do personal work?

15. To what extent is the end of religious education to be found merely in processes of thought?

16. To what extent is the end of religious education allegiance to certain persons, values, and convictons such as are found in the Person of Christ, in the Golden Rule, and other examples of Christ's teachings?

17. Does God give guidance to the inquiring and receptive mind? Does this guidance come through:

a. Family wishes?
b. Personal qualifications?
c. Personal tendencies?
d. Personal needs?
e. Advice of good friends?
f. One's own likes and dislikes?
g. A conviction of personal election and mission?

V.

What Ought the Church to Be in View of Our Perplexities and Needs?

Luther's great idea of "salvation by faith" is true, but it is only a part of the truth. Salvation is begun and continued by faith, but achieved through fellowship and labor, and not so much through any kind of fellowship as through a particular fellowship or group of those who share the same faith, and whose relations with each other afford an opportunity for *living out* reciprocally the mind and spirit of Jesus in their daily intercourse. Such a group is the true unit of the Church Universal. Where it is present, there is the Living Christ. It is Christ incarnate in the fellowship who redeems us and society. God is truly in such a group reconciling the world to himself.

Such local groups may be thought of as power houses, experimental stations, demonstration points, the living consciences of the villages, cities, or nations in which they are to be found. They afford a fellowship within which men know that they have passed from death into life because they love the brethren; they supply the dynamic by which moral and spiritual transformations may be achieved in the lives of individuals and the customs of communities; they serve as laboratories within which may be discovered through experiment what God's will involves in human relations; they demonstrate a quality of corporate and personal life superior to that which is characteristic of society in general; and they stand ready to remind the whole community of the moral implications of issues which arise in its life and to take the initiative in creating a public opinion favorable to good will, justice, and truth. Are you prepared to serve as the minister of Jesus Christ in such a group? Are you prepared to convert the parish to which you go into such a group?

Questions

1. Do you know parish churches where the people's faith in God and love for each other is such:

a. That employers are concerned about a readjustment of relations with employees?

b. That individuals are experiencing a re-creation of personality and an enhancement of their relation with their fellows?

c. That church members who are stockholders refuse to accept sweated dividends?

d. That men of all races and social positions feel at home in the Sunday morning service?

e. That they are concerned about the expression of the Christian conscience on all communal issues?

f. That as a congregation they are accustomed to confess their corporate responsibility for the sins of the community?

g. That they wish both to support foreign missionaries and guarantee that other church members going abroad for business or pleasure will carry with them the same missionary spirit?

h. That their zeal to discover truth and capacity to appreciate beauty always tend to increase?

2. What is the relative importance of the sermon in realizing the above?

3. How can services be arranged and conducted so as to contribute more to the spirit of worship?

4. Supposing a real estate agent who is a member of your congregation finds that to be a Christian in his business means ruin. Has the whole church fellowship any responsibility to see him through?

5. How can the Church be realized as a community fellowship rather than as denominational fellowship?

6. Is the Church a community of saints or a fellowship of sinners?

7. If you were now making out a time card for one week of life as a parish minister, what would be the percentage of your total working time that you would wish to reserve for:

a. Personal work?
b. Preparation of sermons?
c. Executive duties?
d. Activities?
e. Reading?
f. Private worship?

Bibliography

The following recent books and pamphlets may be found interesting as illustrative of the growing concern for a deeper and more vital conception of the Church:

WHITHER BOUND IN MISSIONS—*D. J. Fleming*—Association Press.

RELIGION AND WORSHIP—*Willard L. Sperry*—Macmillan.

THE CHRISTIAN SOCIETY—*T. R. Glover*—Doran.

THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH IN THE MODERN WORLD—*Raymond Calkins*—Macmillan.

THE RELIGION OF DEMOCRACY—*William Adams Brown*—Scribner.

THE CHURCH OF THE SPIRIT—*Francis Greenwood Peabody*—Macmillan.

THE REASONABLENESS OF CHRISTIANITY—*D. C. Macintosh*—Scribner.

WHY THE CHURCH?—The Inquiry.

STUDENTS AND THE CHURCH—British Student Christian Movement.

STUDENTS AND THE CHURCH UNIVERSAL; A REPORT OF THE THEOLOGICAL CONFERENCE AT INDIANAPOLIS, 1923—Association Press.

WHY JOIN THE CHURCH?—*Charles E. Jefferson*—Association Press.

THE WORLD'S STUDENT CHRISTIAN FEDERATION—*John R. Mott*—Association Press.

THE CLAIMS OF THE MINISTRY ON STRONG MEN

BY

GEORGE ANGIER GORDON

MINISTER AT THE OLD SOUTH CHURCH, BOSTON

NEW YORK

STUDENT YOUNG MEN'S CHRISTIAN ASSOCIATION

124 EAST TWENTY-EIGHTH STREET

1909

The Claims and Opportunities of the Christian Ministry

A SERIES OF PAMPHLETS
EDITED BY JOHN R. MOTT

THE CLAIMS OF THE MINISTRY ON STRONG MEN

By GEORGE ANGIER GORDON

SERIES OF PAMPHLETS ON THE

CLAIMS AND OPPORTUNITIES OF THE CHRISTIAN MINISTRY

THE CLAIMS OF THE MINISTRY ON STRONG MEN

By GEORGE ANGIER GORDON

THE RIGHT SORT OF MEN FOR THE MINISTRY

By WILLIAM FRASER MCDOWELL

THE MODERN INTERPRETATION OF THE CALL TO THE MINISTRY

By EDWARD INCREASE BOSWORTH

THE PREPARATION OF THE MODERN MINISTER

By WALTER WILLIAM MOORE

THE MINISTER AND HIS PEOPLE

By PHILLIPS BROOKS

THE MINISTER AND THE COMMUNITY

By WOODROW WILSON

THE CALL OF THE COUNTRY CHURCH

By ARTHUR STEPHEN HOYT

THE WEAK CHURCH AND THE STRONG MAN

By EDWARD INCREASE BOSWORTH

THE MINISTER AS PREACHER

By CHARLES EDWARD JEFFERSON

LETTER FROM PRESIDENT ROOSEVELT
ON THE CALL OF THE NATION FOR ABLE MEN TO LEAD THE FORCES OF CHRISTIANITY

THE CLAIMS OF THE MINISTRY UPON STRONG MEN

By strong men, I mean persons of intellectual power, who are at the same time persons of high moral ideals and intense moral enthusiasms. By the ministry, I mean the service of a Christian preacher in some one of the various churches of our time. If our men of intellectual power are not at the same time men of high moral ideals and intense moral enthusiasms, the ministry has no claims upon them. It does not want them; they are not fitted to teach religion because they are not experts in it. They are not experts because they are without first-hand, abundant, and joyous knowledge of it. Such persons become, by their intellectual power, a damaging influence upon religion; they lead the public to think that the intellect has little or nothing to do with religion; they stimulate a revolt against reason and a return to fanaticism. It must be repeated, therefore, that our strong man is one whose chief in-

terest in life is moral and spiritual. He is one whose governing aspiration is for excellence of being, high bearing in his relations with men and with God. A young man of intellectual power may be sure of his fitness for the ministry if his whole heart kindles into flame as he reads and ponders these words: "Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled."

The first reason why young men of this character should enter the ministry is found in the fact that religion is a fundamental human interest, and should not be allowed to rest in incompetent hands. We know what happens when other great human interests are left in incompetent hands. What would become of the community if the practice of medicine should fall into the hands of quacks? Here we are swift, and yet none too swift, to see the calamity that would follow if this vast interest should be committed to ignorant and perverse men. The same issue of woe is inevitable when economics, art, science, sanitation, government, and philosophy are intrusted to the incompetent. Respecting all human interests, we may use the words of the Hebrew seer: "Woe to thee, O land, when thy king is a child." That is

always a calamity, and the greater the interest thus outraged, the greater the woe.

Religion is the sovereign interest of man. It is the strongest force in human history, it is the deepest fact in human nature. Modern scholars have brought us face to face with the universality and the momentousness of religion. There are today many great living religions; they attest the religious nature of the race to which we belong. Modern scholars have not only shown us with convincing power the universality and vitality of religion; they have shown us also the tendency of great religions to degenerate. This degeneration has run riot in all the greater religions of the East; it has run riot in Christianity. The most tragic chapter in the history of Europe is that which records the confusion of Christianity with alien and inferior cults, the resolution of the sublime religion of Jesus Christ into a vast compound of the true and the false, of the credible and the incredible. This degeneration has been brought upon the Gospel of Christ because the teachers and preachers of Christ's religion have been, in many cases, unequal to the trust committed to them. This degeneration has been brought upon the Gospel of

Christ chiefly because, in some communions some of the time and in other communions all of the time, teachers and preachers of the Gospel have been conspicuously incompetent. Who can stand in the Church of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem, and witness the service there, without inexpressible sorrow, without confessing his inability to find in the degraded religion even the marred features of the religion of Jesus? The ministers who conduct that ceremonial are sincere but ignorant, devout but fanatical, loyal to the supreme human interest but infinitely incompetent. If it were music that men thus shamefully treated, or painting, or sculpture, or building, or poetry, or history, or science, the world would break forth in ridicule and scorn. When it is religion, the world suffers in silence over this degeneration and woe.

Preachers are needed who are qualified to teach the ideas of Jesus. His idea of man personal and social, His idea of God in His relation to men and races of men, His vision of eternal life in this temporal world and His conception of the kingdom of Infinite Love, are of supreme concern to our modern world. Is it not worth while to perpetuate this high

teaching? And do we not need men of power for this service?

The work of the preacher is not exhausted in the office of teacher. His great aim in the presentation of ideas is to affect the heart. His chief purpose is to make character after the type of Jesus Christ. The success of this endeavor is essential to the life of civilized man. And only men great in character can render this supremely desirable and supremely difficult service; only they can create character of their own type; only they can fashion the hearts of men after the pattern of Jesus Christ.

The preacher sets himself to continue in the earth the Master's work of mercy. There is the army of the unsuccessful, the host caught and overwhelmed in the tragedy of the world, the multitude left behind and abandoned to their fate by those who ride in the triumphant chariots of progress; and, besides, there is the multitude of those that mourn, whose love is lost and whose hope is dead. Here is a region of life known to few as it is to the Christian minister. Here the sympathies and the wise services of a great nature act like the strong sunshine upon the earth in the grip of winter. Here the wilderness and the

solitary place rejoice, and the desert blossoms as the rose. Here the tradition of Christ's compassion repeats itself, and in so doing renews the immemorial miracle of the upright and loving soul.

To bring in a great fellowship among men and between men and God is the comprehensive aim of the preacher. To use in the interest of this high fellowship the gift of the teacher, the function of the maker of character, the office of the priestly soul, calls for strong men. The best word that I recall from my seminary days is the word of a Methodist preacher: "God and a fool might do as much good in the world as God and a wise man, but they have never done it." They never will do it. If our religion is to be great and to do great things, it must be in the care of great souls—souls great in illumination and in intense and pure desire.

A second reason why young men of power should enter the ministry is found in the fact that strong men have been in this service from the beginning, and that strong men are in it today. The degeneration that I have referred to in history has been often resisted by these strong men, and, when it could not be wholly checked, it has been mitigated by them.

The degeneration that we all fear is now, in a large and hopeful way, held back by men of strength. This apostolic succession in the past pleads for renewal in the finest youth of today. This company of brave, contemporary servants of the supreme interest of society sends forth its appeal for reinforcements.

Strong men have served in this vocation—that proposition is not open to doubt. A Christian preacher first introduced to Europe, to the Gentile world, the distinctive element in our civilization. The greatest man that ever sailed the Mediterranean Sea was not Pericles, nor Alexander, nor Hannibal, nor Cæsar, but Paul. His shadow lies upon Europe as does that of no other man in its history. When Europe began to renew her life in the sixteenth century, it was a Christian preacher who led the way. Our freedom began, not with any scientist, philosopher, man of letters, or man of affairs. It began with Martin Luther. We recall Origen, Athanasius, Augustine, Wyckliffe, Calvin, Knox, Edwards, Channing, Parker, Bushnell, Beecher, Brooks, and through them we recall a host that no man can number who in the vocation of the preacher have wrought

righteousness in the earth, and in the hearts of men have been as the flood-tide of divine regard.

That strong men are in this service today is frequently called in question. Today, it is said, the Church has golden chalices and wooden priests. There is doubtless some ground for this complaint. It originated, I believe, with Savonarola, and we know that it was the truth and no slander upon his lips. It was the habitual complaint of Emerson, although, when in the Harvard Divinity School, Emerson uttered this complaint for the last time, Henry Ward Beecher was preaching in Brooklyn and Phillips Brooks was preaching in Boston. The Church has not always had golden chalices, but from the days of the Apostles she has never been without wooden priests. If I am to judge from my own observation, extending now over many years, I must conclude that on the average there is more sense and reason, more genuine piety and wholesome human feeling, more effective administration and intense devotion among American preachers than at any other period of my existence. The shining names, the great national personalities, may be absent. The preacher is subject to the limitation that always overtakes

the specialist. The increased division of labor has further reduced his importance. The passing of all regard for mere officialism has taken with it a vast rubbish heap that in other days glittered like gold. These things do not count in a fair estimate. The ministry has men in it today of whom any calling might well be proud. In college they proved themselves, in many cases, the equals of their fellows. Their subsequent career has been that of the lover and servant of truth; and to stand among these men in this service is a dishonor to no thinker, to no scholar, to no personality, however great.

I sometimes think that a profession is in the healthiest condition, not when general attention is fixed upon its great names, but when the public is disposed to deny the existence in it of great names. Men do their best work, as a rule, before they become famous. The fame of great men, great universities, and great nations, is not without serious peril. All over this broad land today preachers of the Gospel are studying and thinking and living as ministers in great numbers have done at no time since the Apostolic Age. They have inherited only dis-

credited systems of opinion and vast masses of unwinnowed learning. Under these conditions, they have had to provide for their people the vision of God and life's supreme consolation. They have become, by scores and hundreds, under this discipline, men of originality and depth, of great character and precious influence. It is never just or safe to argue from the absence of fame. The still small voice is the mightiest force in human history. At fitting seasons, and under the provocation of excessive contempt, it may become, as in a Luther or a Knox, a voice like the sound of many waters. Famous Russia was defeated by Japan, a nation largely without fame. Power in the end wins recognition; but, if it be power aside from the kinds usually admired, it may have long to wait. Because it is not recognized, it would be unjust and unsafe to conclude that it does not exist. While men sleep the tide rolls to the flood; while men prate about the absence of power in the ministry today, that power is rising in a mighty silent service. Meanwhile we poor, brainless preachers are strong enough to do our work as in our great Taskmaster's eye, and quick enough to find food for mirth in the haughty manner of our

critics. We know them well; we love them well; and the fear of them in no wise disturbs us.

It may be further said that the satisfactions of the ministry are such as appeal to strong men. Upon this point there is again some doubt. It is believed in certain quarters that preachers live sheltered lives, that they feed upon nothing but indiscriminate and foolish praise. A year or two in this vocation would, I am sure, be sufficient to dissipate this illusion. When in 1875 I went as a home missionary to Temple, Maine, the first compliment I received at the close of my first sermon was from a veteran of the War of 1812, and it ran thus: "Elder, I like to hear you preach. I have had the best sleep today that I have had in a month. Your voice reminds me of my mother's lullaby." Those who think ministers never hear the truth about their work are greatly mistaken. They have yet to discover that piety carries in it, now and then, an immense aptitude for imparting information with a sting in it. Manly men in the ministry get their full share of honest and rough treatment from their fellow-men. I discover no immunity for the preacher here, and, therefore, offer no bribe. Indeed, the memory of

any minister of considerable experience is rich in examples to the contrary, and they are part of the fun of living.

Nor is there any chance for a minister to become rich. In comparison with many other vocations, preachers are poorly paid, and when the preacher's salary is large, as it sometimes is, the human suffering and the great causes of human enlightenment and relief appeal to him with irresistible power, and thus absorb much of his income. Neither dignity in the general regard nor wealth is among the inducements to enter the ministry. There are, however, other inducements that sing in the wholesome human heart.

There is the satisfaction of a noble service, one into which an honest man may put his entire nature. When the day's work is done, the worthy minister may enjoy the reflection of having done much for which he has received no pay—much for which there will never be the least material reward. He may know that he has served his Father in secret because of his love for the service. The chance to do that is the exclusive privilege of no profession; but in the ministry it is, I believe, larger than in any other.

This habit of doing good, with no prospect or thought of material reward, sets free in a man's heart singing voices; and the music they make is not of this world.

Another immense satisfaction of the preacher is the love that he may awaken in others for the highest things. Here we meet the teacher's satisfaction. One cannot think of Socrates walking the streets of Athens with a band of elect youth about him, careless of dress and money and the poor prizes of the world, turning the thought of his generation to the dignity of the intellectual life, without seeing in that great rough face the light of a mighty satisfaction. And in the sphere of the spirit, in the same vocation, we meet Jesus. We see His soul in His eyes as He looks upon those whose love for the Eternal He has kindled. We hear Him say over one poor, wretched life that He had brought back to honor, "I have meat to eat that ye know not of." Such satisfactions all genuine servants of the mind and spirit will always have.

There is still another satisfaction in the minister's life. I mean his unique relation to his kind. He is with his people in the great crises of life. His sympathies enfold the families committed to his care

when children are born, when they are dedicated by their parents in baptism to the Highest, when these children grow up and enter the glorious but perilous world of youth, when they, in turn, build homes of their own; and again in anxiety, in misfortune, in bitter grief, and in death the heart of a worthy minister of Christ is with his people. All this issues in a relation to human beings absolutely unique in this world.

The last satisfaction to which I call attention is that of overcoming difficulties. The ministry is classed economically among the non-productive professions. The clergyman's salary is provided from the savings of others who serve in the productive professions. The stipend is not usually large; it is somewhat uncertain. The minister's tenure of office is also uncertain. Altogether, these facts are apt to chill young men as they look forward to this service. This should not be. These are difficulties to be met and overcome. They may be overcome by the creative spirit of love. Some men have the power to open new industries, to get others to believe in them, and thus to add to the productive power of society. These men are leaders in creative indus-

try. Similar to these men are those preachers who by the power of a great nature create new interest in divine things. Men of this stamp make themselves and their cause essential to the hearts and the happiness of their parishes. They become part of the life of their people, and in consequence their income, while not large, is sufficient and sure. Men of power have made the world: they will continue to make it; and, if the ministry is an unsatisfactory profession today, men of power should enter it, and shape its character by their creative spirit.

What Is Christ's Ideal for His Church for Our Day?

By

FRANCIS P. MILLER

and

GEORGE STEWART

Published for
THE STUDENT DEPARTMENT
of The National Council of
Young Men's Christian Associations

Distributed by
ASSOCIATION PRESS
NEW YORK: 347 Madison Ave.
1926

Copyright 1926
The General Board of
The Young Men's Christian Associations

Printed in the United States of America

Foreword

At its meeting at Lake Forest in September, 1925, the National Theological Sub-Committee of the Student Department decided that the purpose of its work should be "to challenge seminary students to discover the true conception of the Church of Christ for our day and to give themselves utterly to make their present churches into the nature of the true ideal." In the light of this purpose the Committee asked its chairman, Dr. George Stewart, and its secretary, Francis P. Miller, to prepare a series of questions which might be used by theological students in discussion groups or in interseminary conferences and retreats. This brief syllabus is the result.

Contents

		Page
I.	Who Is Christ?	7
II.	What Are Our Principal Philosophical Perplexities?	9
III.	What Are Our Principal Social Perplexities?	11
IV.	What Are Our Principal Spiritual Perplexities?	13
V.	What Ought the Church to Be in View of Our Perplexities and Needs?	15
Bibiliography		18

General Theme

What Is Christ's Ideal for His Church for Our Day?

Christ's Ideal Church would seek to answer life's major questions and meet life's major needs in the life and thought of modern men and women.

I.

Who Is Christ?

Jesus occupies the central position in Christian life and thought. It makes an enormous practical difference what value is placed upon him. Ripe scholars and devout believers of every group differ in the conception of many aspects of Jesus' life but none differ in acknowledging him as the paramount leader of thought and life. No philosopher today with any considerable following, either within Christendom or without, disputes the ethical supremacy of the spiritual and intellectual teaching which Jesus sets forth in his recorded utterances and in his ministry of compassion.

The main facts of Jesus' life, death, and resurrection are as well attested as are the major events in the life of Julius Caesar. He was and is an objective fact. As the central figure in the faith of millions, and as an ethical teacher almost universally acknowledged as supreme, it is important for us to ask such questions as these concerning him.

1. What is the Unitarian position regarding Jesus?
2. What is the Jewish position?
3. Does Jesus differ in kind or degree from us?
4. Is there any logical or spiritual necessity for basing one's faith in the divinity of Jesus on the manner of his birth?
5. How does it affect one's position regarding the deity or the divinity of our Lord to reason from the quality of his moral excellence rather than to base his divinity simply upon the nature of his birth?
6. What Gospels record the story of the miraculous birth of our Lord? Which ones omit the record?
7. Does Paul mention it?
8. Make a list of the differences in the portrait of Jesus as depicted by the respective authors of the Gospels.
9. What is your conception of the "Living Christ" today? Is he abiding in the hearts and minds of men? Does he possess objective reality regardless of whether or not he is received by man?

10. Is the "Living Christ" qualitatively the same as the Jesus of history who walked and talked in Palestine?

11. Was the Cross a necessary experience for Jesus?

12. What did the Cross mean to him?

13. What did the Cross mean to God?

14. Are we speaking correctly when we term hard luck, or accident, or consequence of one's own misdeeds, or biological or social punishment a cross?

15. To what extent is the experience of the Cross, either for ourselves or in a supreme way for Jesus, differentiated from the totality of suffering by such characteristics as:

a. That it is voluntary?

b. That it is for others?

16. Which of the following would you include as elements in your description of the Cross?

a. Is it a supreme educational act, a dramatization of an eternal process whereby redemptive love attracts, arrests, and convinces mankind?

b. Is its power chiefly in its moral influence?

c. Does it appease an angry God who needed innocent suffering to assuage his wrath?

d. How satisfactory is Paul's description: "God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself" (II Cor. 5:19)?

17. Is the chief event of Jesus' ministry Good Friday or Easter Day? Does his way always end in a cross, or should we look through the Cross to ultimate victory?

18. Can Christ rightfully claim the allegiance of every man?

19. Can he claim to be the Lord of Life and of Thought?

II.

Philosophical Perplexities?

No serious person will deny that men are burdened with perplexities above and beyond those which afflicted our fathers. Machinery has speeded up life and made it complex; astronomy has enlarged our universe beyond the wildest flights of imagination, while microscopic research and speculation have revealed forms of life and energy unbelievably minute, both causing vast changes in our idea of God. Biblical criticism has caused men to shift their faith from literal descriptions to underlying experiences; psychology has in some realms clarified and in others confused men's thinking. Theology and other realms of philosophy have few of the old landmarks left; even the stable law of gravitation is proved by Einstein to be only a relative force. Are we not as a generation in the predicament which John Muir described when he wrote home from the Yosemite: "I am tired but happy, with a life-full of glorious problems"?

Questions

1. Is the universe friendly?

2. Is God in control?

3. Is the ultimate cause behind theistic evolution the Christian God?

4. To what shall be one's prior allegiance—to one's class, nation, or God?

5. If to God alone, will not any modern state break down under individualism?

6. Cardinal Manning once said to Hilaire Belloc: "All human perplexities are ultimately theological." How far is this true?

7. Does it make any practical difference whether you believe:
   a. That God is one—*monism?*
   b. That God is many—*pluralism?*
   c. That God is in all and through all—*pantheism?*

8. Does the solution of the following problems go back to the fundamental problem of the nature of God:

a. Whether there is an answer to prayer?

b. Whether there is such a thing as spiritual guidance?

c. Whether social evils can be stamped out; whether human nature can change or be changed?

d. Whether bitter and sour dispositions and stained lives can be sweetened and given newness of life?

e. Whether an adequate international organization can be worked out so that all peoples may realize their potential capacities?

III.

Social Perplexities

Institutions and customs regarded by our fathers as permanent manifestations of their social philosophy and faith are proving less suitable to the needs of our time. The verdict on democracy itself is more frequently "not proven." In the industrial system strain increases between employer and employee. Racial groups all over the world are more self-conscious and more sensitive to discrimination. In such a changing world what is the mission of the Church? The only church worthy of the name of Jesus Christ is one where men discover a fellowship in which institutions and forms are ever subject to readjustment, and verbal expressions of faith are ever subject to restatement in order that these may continue in the midst of a changing world to be an expression of the truth which they embody. The eternal values abide, the form of description changes.

Questions

1. Is government under the name of democracy becoming an instrument by which the few who control industry secure their own position? How far has the Church become identified with the few who control?

2. Is democracy now synonymous with "public good," "racial equality," "freedom of speech," "equality before the law"?

3. Does belief in democracy involve the abdication of private judgment and participation in a communal "goose step"? How far are the opinions expressed in the sermons you hear a reflection of this "goose step"?

4. Is it possible for an informed public opinion to register in Washington with sufficient force to secure action? What is a minister's duty, if any, here?

5. Why are the mass of industrial workers outside the Church?

6. Suppose a Negro were to come into your Church?

7. Why is religion so often a bulwark of "things as they were"?

8. Is God interested in maintaining the "rights of any group"?

9. Do you know of any theological seminary whose teaching is determined by the theological preferences of the industrial magnates who are members of the congregations of the ministers who sit on the seminary's board?

10. Do you know of any parish church which is serving as an experiment center in:

a. The removal of race conflict?

b. The development of fellowship between workers by hand and workers by brain?

11. Is there a fair distribution of wealth?

12. If wealth were redistributed fairly now, would that right our major economic wrongs?

13. To what extent are *all men free?*

14. To what extent are all men equal?

15. Is it any more ethical for a state or a majority to control and fix prices and usages than for an individual to do so?

IV.

Spiritual Perplexities

For more thoughtful folk the great perplexity of our day is in the realm of the spirit. It is incredible, of course, that there should be any ultimate conflict between science and religion in a world where both are but different approaches to the same reality. But there is vast perplexity among those whose thought forms and verbiage have been acquired from modern science. The Church has a tremendous responsibility to discover and sympathetically interpret a statement of faith comprehensible to these. But of equal importance and far more difficult is the Church's responsibility for that vast majority who have no perplexities because they have no thought. There is truth in the charge that in the United States we have built a society on comfort and wish to call it a civilization. Prayer or worship can have no meaning apart from magic to the fat, profit-seeking soul. A genuine Christian Church can survive only as it discovers how it can inoculate men whose souls are rotting from contentment over sordid commercial success with such a divine discontent that they are constantly being driven out into a perpetually fresh quest for God.

Questions

1. Some questions that deserve a minister's best and most continuous thought:
   a. What do I mean by a personal God?
   b. What are the implications of "relativity" for faith?
   c. What is the relation of the individual to his fellows? Are we isolated or are we members of the Body of Christ?
   d. What is *matter?* What is *spirit?*
2. How far has religion come to be a mere matter of "eminent respectability"?
3. How far is the conflict of conservative *vs.* radical, the *real* religious issue of our time?
4. Why does the faith of American Christians seem to make relatively so little difference in life?

5. What kind of faith is a re-creative force? Under what conditions is it operative?

6. Why is there no more spiritual perplexity? How far is the religion you know an opiate?

7. What do you think of the statement that "nothing that is expressed in words can be true"?

8. Why is God regarded as so inconsequential in their lives by the generality of folk?

9. How far has *success* in life come to be a criterion of the quality of faith in the congregations you know?

10. What are the conditions of a man growing his own soul—not borrowing someone else's?

11. Do you know of churches where:

a. The minister is helping to meet perplexities and needs of individuals?

b. The worship service adequately symbolizes the spirit of reverence and awe in the presence of God?

c. Sermons represent the minister's effort to share with the congregation in a fresh revelation of truth rather than in repetition of old shibboleths?

12. Does prayer make any difference apart from the one who prays?

13. Are conversions a thing of the past?

14. Should all men do personal work?

15. To what extent is the end of religious education to be found merely in processes of thought?

16. To what extent is the end of religious education allegiance to certain persons, values, and convictons such as are found in the Person of Christ, in the Golden Rule, and other examples of Christ's teachings?

17. Does God give guidance to the inquiring and receptive mind? Does this guidance come through:

a. Family wishes?
b. Personal qualifications?
c. Personal tendencies?
d. Personal needs?
e. Advice of good friends?
f. One's own likes and dislikes?
g. A conviction of personal election and mission?

V.

What Ought the Church to Be in View of Our Perplexities and Needs?

Luther's great idea of "salvation by faith" is true, but it is only a part of the truth. Salvation is begun and continued by faith, but achieved through fellowship and labor, and not so much through any kind of fellowship as through a particular fellowship or group of those who share the same faith, and whose relations with each other afford an opportunity for *living out* reciprocally the mind and spirit of Jesus in their daily intercourse. Such a group is the true unit of the Church Universal. Where it is present, there is the Living Christ. It is Christ incarnate in the fellowship who redeems us and society. God is truly in such a group reconciling the world to himself.

Such local groups may be thought of as power houses, experimental stations, demonstration points, the living consciences of the villages, cities, or nations in which they are to be found. They afford a fellowship within which men know that they have passed from death into life because they love the brethren; they supply the dynamic by which moral and spiritual transformations may be achieved in the lives of individuals and the customs of communities; they serve as laboratories within which may be discovered through experiment what God's will involves in human relations; they demonstrate a quality of corporate and personal life superior to that which is characteristic of society in general; and they stand ready to remind the whole community of the moral implications of issues which arise in its life and to take the initiative in creating a public opinion favorable to good will, justice, and truth. Are you prepared to serve as the minister of Jesus Christ in such a group? Are you prepared to convert the parish to which you go into such a group?

Questions

1. Do you know parish churches where the people's faith in God and love for each other is such:

a. That employers are concerned about a readjustment of relations with employees?

b. That individuals are experiencing a re-creation of personality and an enhancement of their relation with their fellows?

c. That church members who are stockholders refuse to accept sweated dividends?

d. That men of all races and social positions feel at home in the Sunday morning service?

e. That they are concerned about the expression of the Christian conscience on all communal issues?

f. That as a congregation they are accustomed to confess their corporate responsibility for the sins of the community?

g. That they wish both to support foreign missionaries and guarantee that other church members going abroad for business or pleasure will carry with them the same missionary spirit?

h. That their zeal to discover truth and capacity to appreciate beauty always tend to increase?

2. What is the relative importance of the sermon in realizing the above?

3. How can services be arranged and conducted so as to contribute more to the spirit of worship?

4. Supposing a real estate agent who is a member of your congregation finds that to be a Christian in his business means ruin. Has the whole church fellowship any responsibility to see him through?

5. How can the Church be realized as a community fellowship rather than as denominational fellowship?

6. Is the Church a community of saints or a fellowship of sinners?

7. If you were now making out a time card for one week of life as a parish minister, what would be the percentage of your total working time that you would wish to reserve for:

a. Personal work?
b. Preparation of sermons?
c. Executive duties?
d. Activities?
e. Reading?
f. Private worship?

Bibliography

The following recent books and pamphlets may be found interesting as illustrative of the growing concern for a deeper and more vital conception of the Church:

WHITHER BOUND IN MISSIONS—*D. J. Fleming*—Association Press.

RELIGION AND WORSHIP—*Willard L. Sperry*—Macmillan.

THE CHRISTIAN SOCIETY—*T. R. Glover*—Doran.

THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH IN THE MODERN WORLD—*Raymond Calkins*—Macmillan.

THE RELIGION OF DEMOCRACY—*William Adams Brown*—Scribner.

THE CHURCH OF THE SPIRIT—*Francis Greenwood Peabody*—Macmillan.

THE REASONABLENESS OF CHRISTIANITY—*D. C. Macintosh*—Scribner.

WHY THE CHURCH?—The Inquiry.

STUDENTS AND THE CHURCH—British Student Christian Movement.

STUDENTS AND THE CHURCH UNIVERSAL; A REPORT OF THE THEOLOGICAL CONFERENCE AT INDIANAPOLIS, 1923—Association Press.

WHY JOIN THE CHURCH?—*Charles E. Jefferson*—Association Press.

THE WORLD'S STUDENT CHRISTIAN FEDERATION—*John R. Mott*—Association Press.

13·1048

Date Due

Dec. 6			
Dec. 20			
1-6			
Mar. 15			
NOV 28 '58			
JAN 22 '65			
NOV 11 '66			

698

262.14
M858c

63,410

Mott, John R.
The Claims and Opportunities of the Christian Ministry.

Southern Baptist College
FELIX GOODSON LIBRARY
Walnut Ridge, Ark.